

# SPIRITISM

*A Study of Its Phenomena and  
Religious Teachings*

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TH. GRAEBNER



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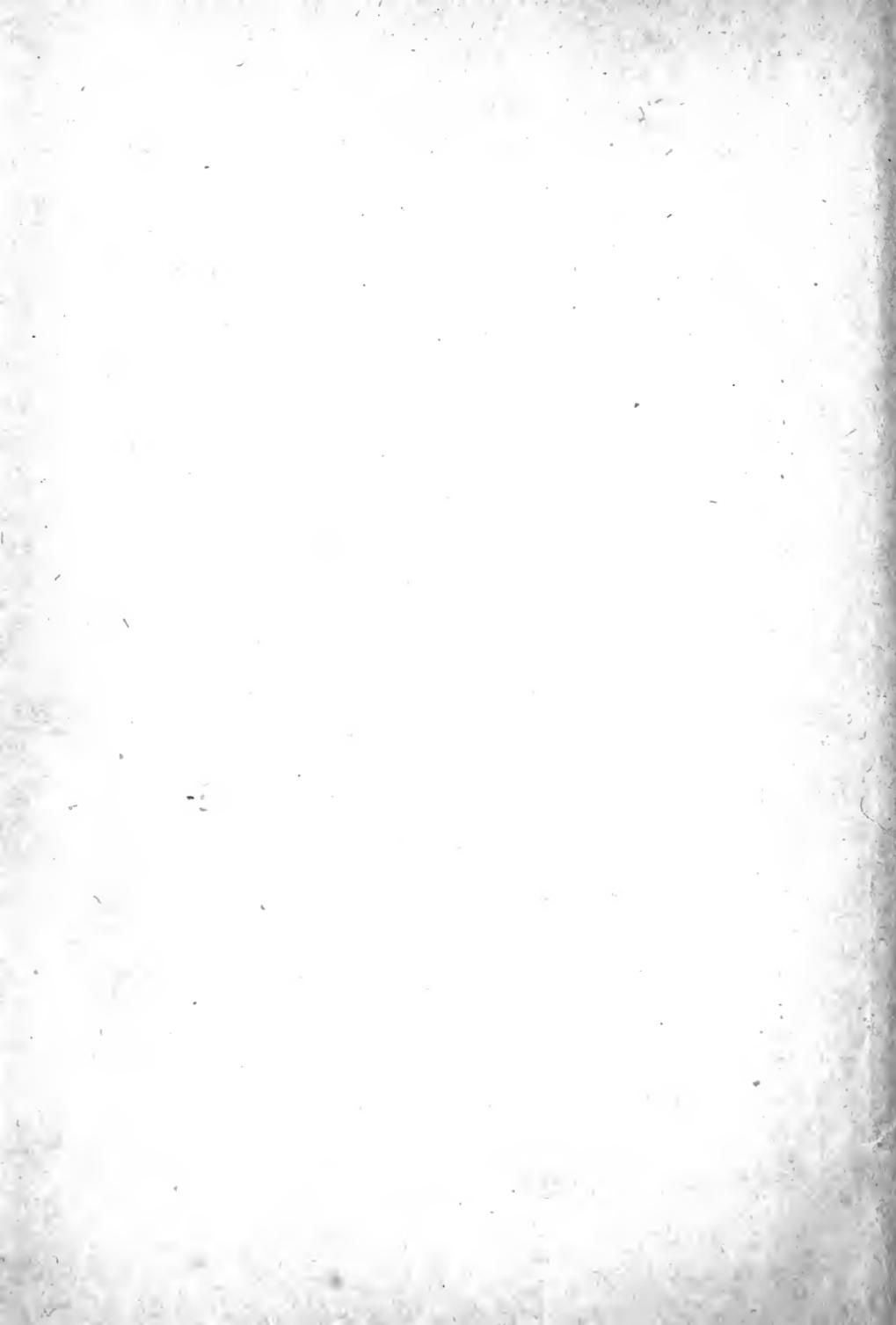
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Religious Teachings*

By

TH. GRAEBNER ✓

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# THE ROAD TO ENDOR

BY RUDYARD KIPLING

(A son of Rudyard Kipling was reported missing in the war. The poet did not seek consolation from Spiritistic mediums, like some of his famous British contemporaries, but wrote the following poem, which hits off the mediumistic contortions for money and at the same time warns against "the sorrows in store" for those who go down the road to Endor.)

The road to Endor is easy to tread  
For mother or yearning wife.  
There, it's sure, we shall meet our dead  
As they were even in life.  
Earth has not dreamed of the blessing in store  
For desolate hearts on the road to Endor.

Whispers shall comfort us out of the dark—  
Hands—ah, God!—that we knew!  
Visions and voices—look and hark!—  
Shall prove that our tale is true,  
And that those who have passed to the further shore  
May be hailed—at a price—on the road to Endor.

But they are so deep in their new eclipse,  
Nothing they say can reach,  
Unless it be uttered by alien lips  
And framed in a stranger's speech.  
The son must send word to the mother that bore,  
Through an hireling's mouth. 'Tis the rule of Endor.

And not for nothing these gifts are shown  
By such as delight our dead.  
They must twitch and stiffen and slaver and groan  
Ere the eyes are set in the head  
And the voice from the belly begins. Therefore,  
We pay them a wage where they ply at Endor.

Even so, we have need of faith  
And patience to follow the clue.  
Often, at first, what the dear one saith  
Is babble, or jest, or untrue.  
(Lying spirits perplex us sore  
Till our loves—and our lives—are well known at Endor.)

Oh, the road to Endor is the oldest road  
And the craziest road of all!  
Straight it runs to the Witch's abode,  
As it did in the days of Saul,  
And nothing has changed of the sorrow in store  
For such as go down on the road to Endor!

## CHAPTER ONE.

### A British Invasion.

IT has been truthfully said that the dangers to true Christianity which operate through the new Spiritist propaganda "do not lie in the force and reasonableness of its claims, but in the state of the public mind, which, as we all know, is but too receptive just now of a fascinating form of thought of this kind."

The time is propitious for the preachers of communion with the dead. Five years have filled the world with mourners. The sense of loss still oppresses them, and the yearning to recall the lost is still poignant. Thousands of such people will listen to an accomplished gentleman like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle with the "will to believe" his teaching that their lost sons can and will speak to them from their dwelling-places in happier spheres. The genuine Christian has learned to say in his bereavement: "Thy will be done!" The believing dead, he knows, are in the presence of their Savior. But the mourner who has no true Christian faith has little other consolation than to nurse his grief. To such the claims of Spiritism, with its promise of continued communication with the dead, offer a solace which some of them do not refuse.

And Spiritism is not neglecting the opportunities presented to it by the ravages of the war. The press at the present time shows what an interest is being taken in the subject. The publication of Sir Oliver Lodge's book *Raymond* helped very materially to direct

the attention of the general public to the subject of communication with the world beyond, and of intercourse with spirits that inhabit it. Sir William F. Barrett, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and other prominent men, have made renewed public acts of faith in the reality of psychic phenomena.

Famous publishing-houses, both in this country and in England, have sensed the state of the public mind very quickly, and are now publishing more volumes on this subject than in any other department of literature except fiction. A large English publishing-house, which has a very active firm representing its interests in this country, announced in one of its recent clip-sheets no less than ten volumes on Spiritism, ranging from one dollar to three dollars and a half in price. At the head of the list there is a book by a famous British novelist and essayist. The publisher characterizes this work as containing "personal and convincing evidence of a continuation of life hereafter." W. T. Stead's *After Death* is brought out in a new edition, and is said to represent "one of the strongest links of evidence for the survival of man's spirit after death."

Next a biography is listed as "the life story of a man who attributed his ability very largely to the fact that he was in constant communication with the other world. A book that convinces because of its very evident sincerity." A fourth title is announced in the following terms: "Probably no other volume on man's immortality has created such a profound sensation. An indispensable work for all who would thoroughly investigate the subject." A fifth: "A clear call from the beyond in a series of authentic communications. The messages came quite unsought, and supply *very comforting* and convincing evidence of the reality of life hereafter." Of a sixth it is said that its treatment

of the relation of psychic investigation to religion "is particularly illuminating and helpful." Of a seventh: These "documents in evidence" (Mr. Hill's) "furnish what seems to be unquestionable evidence of survival after death." Next a "complete history of the rise and progress of Spiritualism." A ninth: a "clear, sane discussion of the fundamentals, and religious and scientific claims, of Spiritualism." The tenth is the autobiography of "one of the world's greatest psychics," and is said to offer "a wealth of incontestable proof of survival after death. Remarkable experiences with the spirit world are recounted with dramatic power and convincing clearness." These ten books are the output of a single British firm within the last year or two.

Another publishing-house of great international repute offers the following in its latest advertising folder: 1. The work of one who "has been for years a lecturer in the Municipal Technical Institute of Belfast, his point of view is distinctly scientific, and likely to command the widest attention." 2. "Dr. C. believes, and regards as proved, that invisible intelligences are all round us and eager to enter into communication with us, if we but give them the opportunity necessary for and adapted to their conditions. It is the object of this book to suggest the general rules and precautions to be observed in seeking such communication." 3. An "authoritative statement by a plain citizen," which "sets forth the impressions produced on the minds of such plain men as are willing to follow truth, even if she lead them into strange lands, but who are none the less careful to first of all make sure that she is really what she professes to be." 4. A book in which the problems discussed "deal rather with the *nature* of life after death, than the *fact* of a survival, which is regarded as proved." 5. An "ex-

traordinary series of spirit messages received through the editor's two children, girls of eleven and fourteen." 6. A discussion of "certain spirit communications purporting to come from Frederic W. H. Myers." Most of the authors are again British.

The special appeal which the most recent works of Conan Doyle and Oliver Lodge have for those who lost sons and husbands in the war resides in the circumstance that both Doyle and Lodge had sons who were killed in battle, and with whom they are now able to communicate, if their presentations are true, through Spiritistic mediums. Their books have found a very large sale, and the public libraries throughout our country continually report these volumes as the most eagerly read, not even excluding the most popular modern fiction in the comparison. An Illinois pastor tells us that, in the public library of his town, Spiritistic literature comprises one-half of all religious works called for.

The editors of our popular magazines have a keen scent for topics that are of current interest. They have recently responded to the new demand for reading-matter on psychic subjects. *Hearst's* ran an article on Conan Doyle which it announced in half-page advertisements in the daily papers. The *Ladies' Home Journal* has had a Spiritistic story, and the *Metropolitan* and *Cosmopolitan* entire series of articles. In the *Cosmopolitan* of December, 1918, Ella Wheeler Wilcox writes on "A Voice from the Beyond," and tells about the difficulties she had in getting into communication with her departed husband by means of a ouija-board. *Harper's Monthly Magazine* of September, 1918, brought an article entitled "The Soul of Fighting France," with the subtitle "Some Spiritual Experiences and War-time Superstitions," which fur-

nishes information regarding the spread of Spiritistic practises in France.

The following are some additional articles that appeared in recent months: December, 1918: "Case of Illness Cured by a Ghost," in *Current Opinion*. January, 1919: "Strange Experiences with Mrs. Vernon," in the *Unpopular Review*. March, 1919: "Imprisoned in the Five Senses," by A. P. Sinnett, in the *Nineteenth Century and After*. April, 1919: "Mesmerism and What Has Come of It," by W. S. Lilly, in the *Nineteenth Century and After*. April, 1919: "Deeper Issues of Psychical Research," by W. Barrett, in the *Unpopular Review*. May, 1919: "Spiritualism and Christianity," by C. E. Hudson, in the *Nineteenth Century and After*. May, 1919: "Is Telepathy the Master Key?" by E. Hinkley, in the *Nineteenth Century and After*. May, 1919: "New Form of Matter," by J. D. Beresford, in *Harper's Magazine*. May 17, 1919: "Immortality and Modern Science," by F. Ballard, in *Living Age*. June, 1919: "Spiritualism and Religion," by M. E. Monteith, in the *Nineteenth Century and After*. June, 1919: "Signs and Portents," by M. Cameron, in *Harper's Magazine*. July, 1919: "Un Grand Peut-être," by Senex, in the *Fortnightly Review*. August, 1919: "What is the Best Psychical Literature?" by Hereward Carrington, in *The Bookman*. August, 1919: "Adventures in Psychical Research," by L. P. Jacks, in the *Atlantic Monthly*. This list includes none of the recent fiction of a decidedly Spiritistic flavor that has appeared in recent magazines.

Even the daily press is taking editorial notice of the new interest in matters psychical, and the number of articles discussing *Raymond* alone must have reached tens of millions of Americans. It is safe to

say that there is not a Sunday paper in the United States which has not reprinted some of the experiments of Conan Doyle, Oliver Lodge and Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Aside from this special literature occasioned by the war, the regular propaganda of Spiritism goes steadily on, and now mounts into millions of printed pages every month. There are now no less than two hundred journals devoted to this propaganda. Two papers, one published in Boston and one in St. Louis, are purported to be edited *by the spirits themselves*. They are read by thousands of curious dabblers in the occult, and, of course, are fairly devoured by those who believe that in Spiritism the world has been given "A New Revelation."

As regards the relation of Spiritism to Christianity, there is wide divergence in the doctrines conveyed through the mediums, and also in the views held by the spokesmen of the cult. Doyle proclaims it "A New Revelation." To him it is an advancement on, and a substitute for, the revelation contained in Scripture. But Sir William F. Barrett, a more eminent scientist and a no less devoted student of psychic phenomena, writes in answer to Sir Arthur: "I do not think that Spiritualism is or ever can be a religion; in fact, it may be inimical to true religion" (*Light*, Nov. 11, 1916). Similar contradictory views—asserted most frequently in a decidedly dogmatic manner by men who deny to the church all right to like assurance in her own teaching—are found amongst American Spiritists also. Spiritism is advocated by some as an aid to true Christianity, a return to the spiritual Christianity of apostolic times. It is proposed by others as a religious system that will replace all existing religions after the war. And another group of Spiritists find

in it the complete conqueror of Christianity. They denounce Christianity as "an effete religious system that has juggled too long with the souls of men." Yet, alongside such utterances one finds others that declare that only in Christianity has mankind any message of hope—in Christianity, that is, purified by Spiritism.

Whatever the contradictory views of its spokesmen, the subject is one of interest to the Christian. Here is a system which claims that the immortality of the soul receives scientific proof from its phenomena. It is, moreover, persistently advertised by its leaders as a "New Revelation." In view of the great propaganda, now at its height, which set in with the beginning of the World War, it is proper that we investigate the nature of the evidence which it urges on the world and the doctrines which it holds.

Before we begin our analysis, however, a word as to the term "Spiritism." The *Lutheran Quarterly* said in 1898: "Spiritualism is incorrectly named. It is not a spiritual science. It does not deal in spiritual matters. It is most material—reducing all that belongs to the spiritual world to a material basis. Its demand for given conditions—always material—is absurd on the face of it. The product of the seance is always material—sounds, knocks, taps, music, messages, materializations so called, these things are all of the solid earth, and render the name Spiritualism a misnomer." Spiritists have pretty well succeeded in substituting the term "Spiritualism" for "Spiritism." The purpose is obvious. Spiritualism is a noble word. It is originally the doctrine that the spirit of man is not derived from matter, but that God is the originator of human life. Besides, the adjective "spiritual" has the conno-

tation of "devout," "godly," "reverent," "heavenly-minded." We prefer to use the terms "Spiritists" and "Spiritism," which have maintained themselves in Germany and France, since we are dealing with a system of religious belief in which the spirits are the presumed sources of revelation.

## CHAPTER TWO.

### The Origin of Modern Spiritism.

TWO little girls—Margareta and Kate Fox—were going to sleep in the attic room of their father's ramshackle old house at Hydesville, N. Y., one night in 1848, when a sound of bumping and rapping was heard in various parts of the room. But the odd noises could not be explained. The same noises were heard again, also by other members of the Fox family. Principally, they were heard at night, but when no heed was paid to them they became more bold and came in the day-time. It was a favorite trick of the spirits to rap on the chair at which Mr. Fox knelt in prayer, and later to rock it violently, only to cease when he had finished his prayer.

Again and again—sometimes at night, sometimes by day—the raps and the sound of a heavy falling body were repeated. Articles of furniture around the house began to move without visible human agency. As a man of the family sat down to dinner one day his chair was whisked from under him. The tall comb worn by Mrs. Fox was at another time tossed mysteriously out of her hair and across the room. These strange phenomena only occurred when one or both of the little girls happened to be present. The "spirits" would rap for none others of the family.

As yet, however, no meaning attached to these rappings; they were simply uncanny noises. Modern

American Spiritism dates its existence from the night March 31, 1848, when, according to the recital of Mrs. Fox, the mother, her youngest child, Katie, said, "Mr. Splitfoot, do as I do," clapping her hands. The sound instantly followed. Then Margaretta, the next oldest, said, "Now do just as I do; count one, two, three, four," striking one hand against the other at the same time, and the raps came as before. This aroused Leah, the eldest, and she then conversed with the spirit. Soon they arranged a code of signals whereby they asked questions and received in reply a series of answers given by means of ghostly taps. Thus they conversed with the "unseen presence." Leah was prompted to get a large alphabet, and, by pointing to letters and having them identified by raps on the table, had spelled out to her this message: "Dear friends, you must proclaim these truths to the world. This is the dawning of a new era, and you must not try to conceal it any longer. When you do your duty God will protect you, and good spirits will watch over you."

Throughout the neighborhood spread the news of the "haunted house." Still further traveled the fame of the two children whose occult powers enabled them to hold communication with spirits. The family moved to Rochester. There the three girls gave "seances" that were the wonder of the country. The theory that spirits of the dead could converse by raps, etc., with certain living persons known as "mediums," was not new. But it remained for the Fox sisters to revive that belief, and to start in America a wave of Spiritistic belief that quickly spread over the whole world, and found thousands of converts.

After Rochester came Albany and Troy, and while in Troy, it is written, Margaretta was threatened with

bodily harm. But even this, like many other troubles, was overcome by "some power not human."

Next came New York City. Here, it seems, there were great demonstrations, the manifestations having been witnessed for nearly three years. Noted men, among them William Cullen Bryant, and other literary celebrities, attended seances and were puzzled. Finally they were given "messages" that made them believers. Physicians sought to explain the phenomena by scientific theories, but even they, according to quotations from New York papers, failed. Lawyers, judges, and the most highly educated of other classes, called, all going away in amazement. Among their visitors were Harriet Beecher Stowe and James Fenimore Cooper.

Soon after the sisters visited Europe. The cleverest men and women of the day flocked to their seances. Thackeray, Browning, the Czar of Russia—throngs of geniuses, celebrities, kings and queens—took eager interest in the mystery. Scientists set clever traps to expose the girls' possible trickery. But from each test the sisters emerged triumphant. At last even those who refused to believe in Spiritism confessed that they could not explain how the thing was done, nor discover the faintest trace of fraud.

Countless people, on the other hand, were certain that these uneducated girls had in some supernatural way the means of forming the connecting link between this world and the unknown. Other mediums followed in their footsteps. Spiritism became a fad—almost a religion. In America and Europe alike it was practised. When James Fenimore Cooper lay dying he is reported to have announced: "The Fox sisters foretold this very hour." Czar Nicholas I. is said to have set the date of his coronation by their advice.

The Foxes were the talk of two continents. Leah married a wealthy Wall Street man; Kate married a London lawyer; Margaretta became the wife of Kane, the great arctic explorer. For a time all of them prospered. Then they fell on evil days and hard luck. And in 1888 Margaretta made public confession that *their whole Spiritualistic mystery was a gigantic fake!* She said she and Kate, as children, used to throw apples on the floor at night (causing a sound as of bodies falling), and then hide the apples in their bed when the family came to investigate. They also found they could snap the joints of their toes, thus producing a sound as of "raps." All this they did, at first, as a joke. The "spirit theory" enabled them to play tricks on grown people without being punished—like slyly kicking away a chair as some one was about to sit on it, or upsetting a laden table. Leah had been the only one to suspect them, and they had let her into the secret. It was Leah and Margaretta who suggested turning the childish joke into a money-making scheme. Kate indorsed Margaretta's confession. Leah, to the last, declared there had been no fake about the affair.

At the Academy of Music in New York, October, 1888, Margaretta made public confession of the fraud, showing also the way she had produced the mystic rappings by snapping her toe joints, and revealing other secrets of the fake. She even produced the famous rappings so that they could be heard plainly by the large audience throughout the hall in which she spoke, and said that the noise was made by the movement of her big toe joint. This exposure bears on its face the marks of truth. It is a document evidently spoken out of a soul that had tired of deceit, and was nauseated with deception.

We can not do better than to give a little of the exact language of this curious confession. "I think," she says, "that it is about time that the truth of this miserable subject [Spiritism] should be brought out. It is now widespread all over the world, and unless it is put down soon it will do great evil. I was the first in the field, and I have the right to expose it."

We might quote at great length from this confession of one of the founders of modern Spiritism. The substance of it is that Margaretta and Kate Fox, in a childish spirit of mischief, began the noises which terrified their mother. She called in the neighbors, and they were all puzzled and frightened together. The children, only nine and twelve years old, were themselves frightened at the excitement they had created, and set about finding some way to keep up the mystery.

"No one suspected us of any trick, because we were such young children. We were led on by my mother unintentionally. We often heard her say: 'Is this a disembodied spirit that has taken possession of my dear children?'" Listen further to the pathos and evident truthfulness of the story: "I am the widow of Dr. Kane, the arctic explorer, and I say to you now, as I hold his memory dear, and would call him to me were it possible, I know that there is no such thing as the departed returning to this life. When Dr. Kane met me I told him that I hated this thing, that I had been pushed into it. I explained to him that it was a trick, that I had been forced into it, and did not want to go on with it. I think now that if my brain had not been very sound I should have been a maniac. Spiritualists say that I am mad now; that if I attempt to expose these tricks, I am mad. I have had a life of sorrow, I have been poor and ill, but I consider it my

duty, a sacred thing, a holy mission, to expose it. I want to see the day that it is entirely done away with.” (Quoted in *Lutheran Quarterly*, 1898, p. 3.)

Margarettas confession is supported by a woman relative, Mrs. Norman Culver, who made the following deposition :

“I am, by marriage, a connection of the Fox girls; their brother married my husband’s sister. The girls have been a great deal at my house, and, for about two years, I was a very sincere believer in the rappings; but some things which I saw, when I was visiting the girls at Rochester, made me suspect that they were deceiving.

“I resolved to satisfy myself, in some way; and, some time afterwards, I made a proposition to Catharine, to assist her in producing manifestations. I had a cousin visiting me from Michigan, who was going to consult the spirits, and I told Catharine that if they intended to go to Detroit, it would be a great thing for them to convince him; I also told her that if I could do anything to help her, I would do it cheerfully—that I would probably be able to answer all the questions he would ask, and I would do it if she would show me how to make the raps. She said that, as Margarettas was absent, she wanted somebody to help her, and that, if I would become a medium, she would explain it all to me. She said that when my cousin consulted the spirits, I must sit next to her, and touch her arm when the right letter was called. I did so, and was able to answer nearly all the questions correctly.

“After I had helped her in this way a few times, she revealed to me the secret. The raps are produced with the toes. All the toes are used. After nearly

a week's practice, with Catharine showing me how, I could produce them perfectly myself. At first it was very hard work to do it. Catharine told me to warm my feet, or put them in warm water, and it would be easier work to rap; she said that she sometimes had to warm her feet three or four times in the course of an evening. I found that heating my feet did enable me to rap a great deal easier. I have sometimes produced a hundred and fifty raps in succession. I can rap with all the toes on both feet—it is most difficult to rap with the great toe.

"Catharine told me how to manage to answer the questions. She said it was generally easy enough to answer right if the one who asked the questions called the alphabet. She said the reason why they asked people to write down several names on paper, and then point to them till the spirit rapped at the right one, was to give them a chance to watch the countenance and motions of the person; and that, in that way, they could nearly always guess right. She also explained how they held down and moved tables. [Mrs. Culver gave us some illustrations of the tricks.] She told me that all I should have to do to make the raps heard on the table would be to put my foot on the bottom of the table when I rapped, and then, when I wished to make the raps sound distinct on the wall, I must make them louder, and direct my own eyes earnestly to the spot where I wished them to be heard. She said if I could put my foot against the bottom of the door, the raps would be heard on the top of the door.

"Catharine told me that when the committee held their ankles, in Rochester, the Dutch servant-girl rapped with her knuckles, under the floor, from the

cellar. The girl was instructed to rap whenever she heard their voices calling the spirits. Catharine also showed me how they made the sounds of sawing and planing boards. [The whole trick was explained to us.] When I was at Rochester last January, Margaretta told me that when people insisted on seeing her feet and toes, she could produce a few raps with her knee and ankle.

"Elizabeth Fish [Mrs. Fish's daughter], who now lives with her father, was the first one who produced these raps. She accidentally discovered the way to make them by playing with her toes against the foot-board while in bed. Catharine told me that the reason why Elizabeth went away West to live with her father was because she was too conscientious to become a medium.

"The whole secret was revealed to me, with the understanding that I should practise as a medium when the girls were away. Catharine said that, whenever I practised, I had better have my little girl at the table with me, and make folks believe that she was the medium, for she said that they would not suspect so young a child of any tricks. After I had obtained the whole secret, I plainly told Catharine that my only object was to find out how the tricks were done, and that I should never go any further in the imposition. She was very much frightened, and said she believed that I meant to tell of it and expose them; and if I did, she would swear it was a lie. She was so nervous and excited that I had to sleep with her that night.

"When she was instructing me how to be a medium, she told me how frightened they used to get in New York for fear somebody would detect them, and gave

me the whole history of all the tricks they played on the people there. She said that once Margaretta spoke aloud, and the whole party believed it was a spirit.

"MRS. NORMAN CULVER."

"We hereby certify that Mrs. Culver is one of the most reputable and intelligent ladies in the town of Arcadia. We were present when she made the disclosures contained in the above paper; we had heard the same from her before, and we cheerfully bear testimony that there can not be the slightest doubt of the truth of the whole statement.

"C. G. POMERY, M. D.

"REV. D. S. CHASE."

Spiritualists all over the world denounced this confession. Many of them continued to believe the self-confessed impostor a genuine medium. But the strangest part of all is that Margaretta later retracted her confession, and was received once more into the Spiritualistic fold. She died in Brooklyn in 1893.

## CHAPTER THREE.

### Mediumship and Its Phenomena.

WEBSTER defines "Spiritualism" as "a belief in the frequent communication of intelligence from the world of spirits, by means of physical phenomena, commonly manifested through a person of special susceptibility, called a *medium*." Webster only mentions "physical phenomena," subsuming under this term the "mental manifestations [automatic writing, clairvoyance, etc.]."

A *medium* is a person susceptible, according to the theory, to "spirit" influences. A modern Spiritist writes: "A medium may be described as a 'go between' the two worlds, a sort of psychic bridge; and, just as certain kinds of material are required for ordinary bridges, so they are necessary for this kind. This material is the mysterious psychic force. It is needed for all forms of mediumship." (Horace Leaf, *What Is This Spiritualism?* p. 59.)

The first Spiritistic mediums exhibiting this psychic force in the present world age, according to the historians of the cult, were the Fox sisters. It was in the early fifties, however, that the greatest of all mediums (according to Conan Doyle) developed. His name was D. D. Home, a Scottish-American whose father was said to be a son of the tenth Earl of Home, and whose mother was credited as being gifted with "second sight." Home was given special credence because

he never sought to make money out of his powers. Home traveled much abroad, appearing before scientists and crowned heads, and mystifying them by his peculiar powers. Among those before whom he gave demonstrations was the Czar of Russia, Alexander II., but, says a recent Arthur Brisbane editorial, "he apparently did not tell him that a few years later he would be blown to pieces by a bomb, nor that, within a half-century, his successor, and all that czardom represented, would be wiped from the face of the earth."

Following Home there have been many famous mediums. Mrs. Piper, of Boston, the discovery of Prof. William James, of Harvard, was for years under the observation of the Society of Psychical Research, with remarkable results. Mrs. Piper is alleged to have been under three distinct "controls" during her life. For seven years her communications came from Dr. Phinuit, a French physician, of whose career in life no evidence has ever been found. For four years following she expressed the spirit of "George Pelham," which was the pen-name of a young American author, and, following him, she became the mouthpiece of the "controls" of Stainton-Moses, who had died but a short time before, and who during his life had been a medium of wide reputation. Much of the result of the demonstrations of Mrs. Piper has been kept secret because of its private character. She has never sought notice, nor been accessible to the public in general, and there have been no charges of fraud placed against her.

Another famous medium still alive is Eusapia Palladino, of Italy, who visited this country some few years ago, and was closely investigated by both believers and doubters. Unfortunately for Palladino's repu-

tation, she was detected in fraudulent practises, although many of her demonstrations were credited by investigators as being done without the use of improper methods.

The number of mediums now operating in our American cities is legion. Their methods of communication with the dead are generally restricted to simple trance-speaking, automatic writing, and clairvoyance, while such phenomena as direct writing, spiritual photography, and materialization are on the repertoire of a comparatively small (and correspondingly high-priced) number. Before we take up for discussion the various phenomena of mediumship, a brief summary of views which Spiritists hold regarding life after death will be in place.

“Spiritualists declare that life in this sense is taken up in the new world at the point it was broken off here. That is to say, a person is no better nor worse immediately after dying than he was immediately before.” (Horace Leaf, *What Is This Spiritualism?* p. 48.) “Spiritualism teaches that we enter the next world precisely as we leave this, and begin the round of development where we left off here. In the higher state of being which we enter at the dissolution of the physical frame, we shall retain, to a great extent, recollections of our past life, and shall find that there is an intimate relation between the past, the present and the future.” (J. A. Hill, *Spiritualism*, p. 181.) We read also that, after death, if the spiritual life is kind and gentle and good, the grosser elements of the spiritual body are eliminated, leaving the body more refined and spiritual; so that it can rise into a higher zone, which, in its turn, is composed of the more refined and spiritualized elements eliminated from this higher zone, and the third zone is composed of the still more

refined and spiritualized elements from the second, and so on. (All this is asserted on the authority of communications made by the spirits through mediums.)

In this world the body may be so crippled by disease or accident as to be entirely useless, and yet the mentality will find means for the exercise of its powers, "ofttimes with astonishing vigor." The following communication from the spirit of Bishop Wilberforce was published in the proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research of April, 1895: "Since I left the earth I have been occupied in learning my work and in preparing myself for the life of progress to which my being is now devoted. Already I have passed through the first sphere, where are gathered those who are bound to earth by the affections, or are unable to rise as yet. There I saw some whom I had known in the body, and learned from them and from others much that I needed to know. My work will be of a similar sort till I reach my appointed sphere. I have come to give you this brief word of comfort and consolation. Be of good cheer." The spirits in the "Summerland," we are told on the authority of the spirits themselves, "live in houses with gardens, where the flowers turn toward you as you enter, or, in case they don't like you, turn away." The houses are mostly of red brick, and the bricks are made by extracting substances from the air with a machine like a dynamo. Sir Oliver Lodge, in his new book *Raymond*, gravely informs us that the flight of the soul is not left to the forces of gravitation. The fond fancies of childhood are all ruthlessly dispelled by the discoveries of science. We do not mount to heaven as glorious rays of light, nor as spirit forms clothed in gleaming robes of light, but—how shall I tell it?—we go as "smells"! The human body contains "etheric

substance," which is dissipated at death, but is gathered together by a "spirit doctor who comes round." This etheric substance of the human body is transmitted to the next world by the gases and smells of putrefaction. The spheres where the disincarnate spirits dwell are constructed in a similar way. Here in the "Summerland" there is every natural happiness: charming clothes, glorious gardens, homelike houses, etc.

There is opportunity for moral advancement in this after-life. "If a man would be good, he must do good; if he desires to increase his knowledge, he must continue to strive after it; if he would progress to more spiritual states, he must live more spiritually." "People who have been very wicked here suffer in the next world in a remedial, and not in a vindictive, sense." "There are states or planes to which wrong-doers pass, coinciding with their demerits, and comparable to the conception of purgatory. In them the process is one of purifying, and until that has been fully accomplished, they can not hope to pass to higher and happier conditions."

According to the author of a work entitled *Outlines of Spiritualism for the Young* (Horace Leaf), man is made up of a soul, a spiritual body and physical body. "There is something more than the nerves which we can not see, because it is as fine in its nature as the perfume of flowers. This fine something is called 'nerve-aura.' All above what is required for daily use is thrown off like perfume from flowers. Our spiritual bodies are formed of this fine nerve-aura, which is spiritualized matter. When our spiritual friends and guardians visit us, they look at our spiritual bodies, and, by their purity or otherwise, they can see at a glance what kind of lives we live. People who indulge in evil habits, such as opium or tobacco smoking, and

laudanum and intoxicating drink, carry the appetite with them at death; it is because some of the narcotic and alcohol from these things help to compose the spiritual body, that they crave or hunger for their kind. So that the spirit people seek those in the body who still indulge in these bad habits, and get their craving satisfied through other people" (*Outlines*, pp. 30-32).

**PHENOMENA.** The phenomena through which the spirits of the dead are believed to communicate with the living are grouped under two heads, physical and mental.

A. The *physical phenomena* are differentiated as follows:

1. *The simply physical.* The raising of bodies into the air (levitation). The passing of bodies through walls and curtains (penetration, dematerialization).

2. *Direct writing.* A pencil untouched by human hands will rise and commence the writing of a message. Slate-pencils under a slate are heard writing spiritual messages.

3. *Musical.* Trumpets are blown, guitars and violins played without human agency.

4. *Materializations.* Spirits assume human forms which may be touched, and which address those present.

5. *Spirit photography.* Photographs are shown which reveal more or less distinct images of the departed.

B. *Mental Phenomena.*

1. *Automatic writing.* The medium in a trance state writes messages from the dead, sometimes in languages unknown to her. A piece of cardboard or a thin board, triangular in shape, with a pencil stuck on a corner, glides over the paper when touched by the persons under spirit control, and either writes out

messages in longhand, or spells them out from an alphabet over which the board passes (planchette, ouija-board).

2. *Clairvoyance.* The medium sees and describes the spirits of the dead appearing to her, and conveys communications from them. This is the most common phenomenon, and is part of nearly every (professional) mediumistic seance, and also of the religious service of the Spiritists.

3. *Trance speaking.* The medium discourses on subjects far beyond her knowledge, and in language quite foreign to her ordinary modes of thought.

4. *Impersonation.* The medium loses her identity and speaks in the character of another person, living or dead, imitating every inflection of the voice with astonishing exactness.

5. *Healing.* The medium heals bodily disease by direct mesmeric influence or by discovering medical treatment for a given case.

The commonest phenomenon—clairvoyant communion with the spirits—is illustrated by J. A. Hill, an English Spiritist of prominence, who, in his *Spiritualism* (1919), records the following scene from a Spiritist church service. A clairvoyant medium addresses the audience:

“There is a gentleman here, about seventy-three or seventy-four years old. A well-built gentleman, somewhat red in complexion. I should think he would not have ailed much as a general rule, yet I think he would get a little bit feeble before passing away. He wears a kind of Scotch tweed suit. Full in body, with moustache and beard round here [pointing], and bushy eyebrows. He is surprised to come back here. He would have been surprised if asked to come to a Spiritualist church in earth life. I get Thomas Rhodes, Daisy

Hill Lane. He is showing me now a steel that butchers use; probably a butcher in earth life. . . .

“He is coming with another gentleman, a friend of his, whom I would take to be sixty-three before passing. Fairly well built, very religious in earth life. I see a religious aura obtruding from his body, showing that in life he was a very religious man. He is dressed in a beautiful frock-coat suit, with black gloves, and tall, shiny hat. This gentleman gives me his name as Mitchell Briggs. He is holding a hymn-book with ‘Daisy Hill Primitives’ on the back. I think this gentleman will have been a Rechabite; shows regalia on dress. . . .

“A young soldier builds up here in your surroundings [pointing]. I don’t like describing these soldiers. He looks to be twenty-seven or twenty-eight, but it is hard to judge. Not passed away very long. He comes with another gentleman. His name is John Preston. He says: ‘I lost my life in the present war, and I would do it over again if I had the chance.’

“A lady brings a girl to our friend here, a girl about nine or ten years old. How bright and beautiful this girl appears! This lady is bringing her over, helping her forward. The child has thrown off all earth conditions, and comes in a spirit robe. Her hair is flowing down her back. It is Mrs. Neal’s little girl, Gladys Mary. [Addresses some one in audience.] Do you come from Leeds?

“Answer—Yes.

“Medium—I get that this girl passed away at Leeds, and if you will inquire at Leeds you will find out about the girl. Gladys Mary Neal. You have to ask Alice Hesp. She will tell you.”

One of the most common manifestations, not connected with professional mediums, is automatic writing

or spelling with the ouija-board, or planchette. It now has a tremendous vogue. I have seen a summer hotel near Mobile, Ala., fitted out with this contrivance for the use of the guests. There are few communities where it has not at some time been tried. It is often merely a means of amusement, but there are a great many who have a strong belief that there is something supernatural in it. Sometimes the phenomena are really remarkable. "On one occasion," says the *Lutheran Quarterly*, 1894, page 18, "the name of a person wholly unknown to every one in the room except one, and his hands were not in contact with the table, was correctly spelled out. On another, the name of a town, of which none present had ever heard, was spelled, together with the State in which it was located." Most persons who do not believe that there is any spirit influence suppose that it is due to "electricity." Count Gaspari, after repeated experiments in his own family, was "thoroughly convinced that the spirits had nothing to do with it," but found the presence of "a force which he could not explain."

However, it is the *physical* phenomena of the Spiritistic seance that loom largest in the psychic repertoire. Truly astonishing things happen. Tables and other articles of furniture rise and float in the air; heavy bodies lose part of their weight and may be lifted with ease (*levitation*); objects disappear in air (*dematerialization*) and reappear; albums, books, sounding-trumpets, tinkling guitars float through the air; invisible hands touch heads and faces; entire bouquets of cut flowers lie on the table when the light is turned on; a string on the table-top ties itself into a knot before one's eyes; slates are tied together, sealed, and when opened contain a long spirit message written with crayon.

There are *materializations* of spirits who even leave footprints on flour scattered on the floor, and which, in some rare instances, have become visible to the eye and could be touched with the hands. Lombroso affirms that his mother materialized at least twenty times to him during his seances with Eusapia Palladino, and she would say: “‘My son, my treasure!’ Kissing my head and lips with her lips.” (*After Death—What?* by Cesare Lombroso, pp. 68, 69.)

Concerning the materialization of spirits, Mr. Horace Leaf, a British leader of the cult, writes: “For a long time materialization was pronounced by sincere investigators as nothing but trickery. The very tests they applied seemed conclusively to prove this. One method was to mark surreptitiously some part of the supposed spirit body with some colored material, and after the seance to examine the medium. If the mark was found on him, he was naturally considered a fraud. Thus many materializing mediums were discredited. The solution to the mystery was found when it was discovered that the substance composing the materialized form was extracted from corresponding parts of the medium’s body. On the form dematerializing, these elements returned to the psychic’s body, carrying with them the incriminating marks.” (*What Is This Spiritualism?* p. 135f.) This explanation will not appear convincing to most of us. Still, the subject of materialization remains one of the most baffling to the unprejudiced investigator—and by “unprejudiced” we mean one who is not ready offhand to say that there can be no supernatural element in Spiritualism. This is a report of the celebrated seance in which Mr. Crookes, one of the most famous British scientists, saw both the spirit “Katie” and the medium:

"During one of these seances Mr. Crookes had the satisfaction of seeing 'Katie' and her medium together. Miss Cook [the medium] was crouching on the ground unconscious, whilst 'Katie' stood close behind her. Never before this seance had 'Katie' appeared to greater perfection. For nearly two hours she walked about the room, conversing familiarly with those present. On several occasions she took Mr. Crookes' arm when walking, conveying to him the impression that it was a living woman by his side 'instead of a visitor from the other world.' To assure himself of her substantial nature, he asked her permission to clasp her in his arms, thus to verify interesting observations that had been made by another experimenter. Permission was graciously given, and he accordingly did so. Subsequently Mr. Crookes obtained a series of photographs of 'Katie'; each evening there were three or four exposures of plates in five cameras, giving at least fifteen separate pictures of each seance. Altogether he obtained forty-four negatives. One of the most interesting of the pictures is one in which he is standing by the side of 'Katie.' " (Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 32f.)

Such are, in outline, the phenomena, physical and mental, of mediumship. When it is considered that these phenomena have been made the object of investigations by scientifically trained examiners, and their genuineness is asserted by psychologists, chemists, physicists, mathematicians, astronomers, biologists, jurists, medical men, etc., etc., in many countries, one must say that it will not do to simply dispose of the matter by saying: "Bah, imagination!"—or "Humbug! Trickery!"

But, after all, ARE *they* genuine?

## CHAPTER FOUR.

### The Great Niblo and His Rivals.

THERE is ample ground for the assertion that deception enters very largely into the phenomena of Spiritism. Many a "test" which at first appeared absolutely inexplicable, except on the assumption of supernatural powers, on closer inspection has proved a very simple, though ingenious, piece of sleight of hand. Every device of the experimental psychologist, and often a truly astonishing knowledge of human nature and very unusual powers of penetration, are employed by the mediums in extracting out of the flicker of an eyelid, or a slight contraction of the nostrils, or a suppressed gasp or exclamation, those facts which are announced with such solemnity to the "sitter" as emanations of the spirit-world with which the medium is in contact. Even the greatest mediums have almost without exception been apprehended in most ignoble trickery.

Nor is it so very remarkable that men of the world, professional and business men, who otherwise pride themselves on their immuneness against fraud and deception, should fall a prey to the professed adepts of occult art.

When the ancient Romans had turned to agnosticism and atheism, they fell a prey to Egyptian and Chaldean necromancers, tricksters of the lowest class.

Superstition flourishes wherever, and in the same measure as, spiritual life decays. The stages are, and always have been, belief—unbelief—superstition. When a man loses faith in God, he turns to “Mr. Rudinor, the eminent Rosicrucian Hindoo Mystic Medium and Adept”; to the “Great Madam Mizpah, the World’s Greatest Clairvoyant, Psychic Palmist, and Dead Trance Medium”; to “Prof. W. L. Niblo, the Astral Dead Trance Clairvoyant”; to “Ismar, Psychic Healer and Seeress,” and to “Madame Karma, Instructor in Karmasophy,” all of whom advertised their powers in one issue of the *Chicago Sunday Examiner*.

These advertisements are worth a little closer study.

Professor Niblo has reduced his readings from five dollars to fifty cents. “Without asking questions, and before you speak one word, he tells your full name.” He has brought about more marriages than any medium in America. “I point with pride to my record of successful work the past year: Reunited 198 couples. Brought about 287 marriages. Gained love of certain ones, 375. Located 5 buried treasures. Located 49 absent persons. Overcame 846 rivals. And hundreds of other cases.”

Niblo is “the leader of his profession.” But the “Great Madam Mizpah” has the advantage of him in at least one respect. True, her readings are likewise reduced from five dollars to fifty cents; she issues the same challenge: “Will tell your full name without asking a question.” But Mizpah is, in addition, “born with a double veil,” “is not a clairvoyant from choice, but because Fate has so decreed it. Her ancestors were powerful mediums, and have for ages handed down their wonderful power of gift from generation to generation.” “This occult wonder is placed in a class by herself, towering head and shoulders over

every rival, and is recognized by the profession as their brightest star."

Yet she has a rival, and a dangerous one, in the august person of the "Eminent and Distinguished Rosicrucian Hindoo Mystic Medium and Adept from the Far East—Mr. Russe Rudinor," whose advertisement occupies three-quarters of a column in the same paper. "Never before since the birth of Psychicism has there appeared upon the professional firmament a star so radiant and sparkling with the finer forces of nature and occult power as this cultured and highly gifted adept. Years of study, travels in far Eastern lands and endless research, coupled with rare spiritual and psychic gifts, have crowned him the greatest living authority and exponent of his weird and mysterious profession." Mr. Rudinor has been "endorsed by Hoti Panyanobi (the Light of India) as the seventh link of the Sacred Mystic Circle." His famous five-dollar readings are reduced "this week only" to twenty-five cents. "Without your uttering one word, and without asking you one question, he tells your full name."

Madame Karma offers a correspondence course in occult studies. She gives a *free* "life reading"—"to all who send One Quarter to cover charges." "Over 9,273 mailed last month." "Mme. Karma wishes to state that she will be unable to receive personal callers hereafter, until the new year of 1918, up to which date her services will henceforth be devoted only to the welfare and advancement of her many students, and former patrons for whom she is doing private work, but by 'special request' she will renew her free mail offer for one week longer for the benefit of those who were unable to write before."

One should think that the vulgarity and sensationalism of the methods of advertising adopted by these

mediums would be, in itself, reason enough for intelligent people to withhold their patronage, even if spiritistically inclined. However, when one of these fakers receives some unpaid-for advertising through arraignment in a criminal court for fraudulent stock deals or some other bit of crooked business, it generally develops that a goodly number of society women and of cultured professional men are among their regular clientele, seeking their advice on the matter of investments, and concerning personal or professional relations. It is, moreover, an astonishing fact that, as in the case of fortune-tellers, their dupes will continue to patronize these charlatans even after their trickery has been exposed in a given instance. Seeking the advice of mediums becomes a habit of which people are as little able to break themselves as the dope-fiend and the alcoholic.

The history of the *exposes* of fake mediums is almost as old as modern Spiritism.

In 1847 the Katie King seance was exposed in the presence of Dr. Owen. This *expose* drove Dr. Owen insane. In 1876, Anna Steward was exposed in Terre Haute, Ind. Every Spiritistic journal prior to the exposure declared her to be one of the best mediums in this country. Hull, Jameson and Judge Edmonds affirm that nearly every medium of importance has been exposed. Mediums, as a rule, have two careers: one as a spirit medium, then, when they are exposed, they start out lecturing on the exposure of all mediums. The *Spiritualistic Journal* in 1877 exposed the photographic spirit fraud of Mrs. Blanchard. Dr. Slade, the slate-writing medium, performed before the crowned heads of Europe. In 1876 he was exposed. Dr. Childs discovered that the Katie King spirit was Mrs. Holmes. The Bennetts were marvels, but were exposed and then

went about exposing others. Mr. Holmes, the greatest medium in the history of Spiritism, said: "I doubt if there be five materializing mediums that have not been caught in perpetrating some fraud." (Coombs, *Religious Delusions*, p. 130.)

In 1876, before no less dignified and conservative a body than the British Association for the Advancement of Science, the proposal was made that a special committee be appointed for the systematic examination of Spiritistic and kindred phenomena. In January, 1882, the now celebrated Society for Psychical Research was formally organized. There were various subcommittees of inquiry into the physical phenomena of Spiritism—the knockings, table-turnings, production of "spirit" forms, and similar marvels of the Home-Slade-Moses type of "medium." From the outset, these subcommittees demonstrated the value of psychic research as a protection of the interests of society by exposing, one after another, the fraudulent character of the pretended wonder-workers.

In this region of inquiry no one was more successful than a recruit from distant Australia, by name Richard Hodgson. Hodgson, unlike many others of his associates, had not engaged in psychic research from the hope that the truths of the Bible might thereby be demonstrated. His motive was that of the detective eager to unravel mysteries. From his boyhood he had had a singular fondness for solving tricks and puzzles of all sorts; and when, in 1878, he came to England to complete his education at Cambridge, he naturally gravitated into the company of Sidgwick, Myers and Gurney, the founders of Psychical Research, as men busied in an undertaking that appealed to his detective instinct. He was radically different from them in temperament and point of view—not at all mystical, full

of animal spirits, fond of all manner of sports, and interested in occult subjects only so far as they furnished working material for his nimble and inquiring mind. The Cambridge trio, however, took kindly to him, invited him to join the Society for Psychical Research, and two years after its formation were instrumental in sending him to India to investigate the methods of Madame Blavatsky, the high priestess of the Theosophic movement which was then winning adherents throughout the civilized world.

From this inquiry he returned to England with an international reputation as a detective of the supernatural. With the aid of two disgruntled confederates of the Theosophist leader, he claimed to have demonstrated the falsity of the foundations on which her claims rested, and to have shown that downright swindling constituted a large part of her stock in trade. With redoubled ardor he now plunged into the task of exposing the Spiritistic mediums plying their vocation in England, and for this purpose enlisted the assistance of a professional conjurer, S. J. Davey, who was also a member of the Society for Psychical Research.

Davey, after a little practice, succeeded in duplicating by mere sleight of hand many of the most impressive feats of the mediums; doing this, indeed, so well that many Spiritists alleged that he was in reality a medium himself! Hodgson, for his part, by clever analysis of the Davey mediumistic competitors, brought home to his colleagues in the Society for Psychical Research a lively sense of the folly of depending on the human eye as a detector of fraudulent Spiritistic phenomena. His crowning triumph came with his exposure of Eusapia Palladino, the Italian medium, who is still popular on the European continent. (*The Ghost Hunters*, by H. Addington Bruce.)

A St. Louis Spiritistic medium, Horace Monroe Kanouse, who boasts that he has submitted to investigations by scientific persons for fifteen years without detection, puzzling and confounding them, much as Palladino has done, some ten years ago turned upon himself and his confreres, and exposed many of the so-called mysteries they practise. The former medium demonstrated his seemingly weird powers in over two hundred halls and private residences in St. Louis, and the amazing character of his performances has been testified to by many leading citizens. Among the tricks he exposed are the raising of spirit hands at the curtains, production of strange winds, ghostly playing of violins, firing guns placed behind the medium, materializing spirits of the dead, hurling sitting subjects about the room, moving furniture, the medium's escape from ropes, the talking-trumpet, table-tapping, and freeing the medium's hands and feet. He also tells of the secret "Blue Book" circulated among the Spiritists of the country.\*

Mr. Kanouse's confessions, which are entitled "How I Fooled the Scientists," make very interesting and instructive reading. Here only one or two passages can be quoted:

"Why do I expose the secrets that I have jealously guarded for twenty years? Why do I disclose the most profound deceptions of myself and of other mediums that I have known? It is because I have grown tired of deception. I am sick of the utter humbuggery of it all, of seeing some of the brightest minds of the race wandering into a dark wilderness after false gods, of watching the grief-stricken mother

\*A register containing information about persons in many cities. The information is gathered by the mediums or by their special agents, who visit towns as traveling-men and take note of deaths, marriages, accidents, etc. The book circulates among mediums, who "post" themselves on a town before conducting seances there.

hungering for a word or a hand-clasp from her dead child, and being content with a mouthful of drivel from the lips of some ignorant medium. To quit that dark and illusory land where millions are deceived every night of the year was a relief to me.

"I have been intimately acquainted with nearly all the leading mediums of this country, and have witnessed the spectacular performances of the European clairvoyants. But all alleged spirit manifestations are full of trivialities and utter nonsense. As far as I am concerned, I have used my 'mysterious powers' for the last time. I will administer ghostly comfort to the bereaved no more. Flickering lights, table-rapping tricks, thrumming of spookish fingers on mandolin strings, and tipping and lifting chairs, will no longer be a part of my life."

Nevertheless, it can not be said that Mr. Kanouse's book made a noticeable breach in the ranks of Spiritism. "The gullibility of some people when a fraud in the name of religion is exposed is something inexplicable, if it be sincere," said the *Lutheran World* years ago. "This has been demonstrated a thousand times in the history of Spiritism. In Theosophy and other cults the same thing is true. Many years ago Madame Blavatsky was exposed in Madras. Her secretary turned state's evidence, and investigation showed that her residence was equipped with a large variety of machinery adequate to produce all manner of astonishing results. A clergyman visiting Madras in her absence, soon after the exposure, was admitted to the confidence of her Theosophical friends. He asked them the leading question: 'Why did Madame Blavatsky have all this machinery in her house?' The reply which he received was as follows: 'This also greatly puzzles us, for we

know that she could produce all these effects without machinery through the aid of supernatural powers!"'

The power of the Spiritist medium is well illustrated in the following newspaper story: Mrs. R. L. Green, a Chicago Spiritist, and Mr. Green, her husband, whose agreeable task it was to collect one dollar from each devotee who attended the seances held at the "studio," were fined fifty dollars and costs in a municipal court, Jan. 14, 1910. The session which involved them in trouble was held the previous night. Several plain-clothes officers were in attendance. At the trial one of the officers testified that "a form suddenly appeared and everybody present said, 'Hello, grandpa.' It seems that it was the reincarnation of an Indian chief. He wanted to shake hands with all the members of his tribe, so we all shook hands with him. He told me that there was a young Indian girl at the door who wanted to see me. Then he disappeared, but after a short time he came back. I thought it about time to grab 'grandpa,' so I grasped his wrist. He struggled to get away, and it became apparent that 'grandpa' was Mrs. Green. She offered me two hundred dollars if I would let her go, saying, 'If you don't, you will ruin my business, and I can't get all these people back here again.'" Mrs. Green's attorney demanded of the officer how he knew the form he had grasped was not actually the reincarnation of the chief, which called forth the court's decision that "only material things would be ruled on," and that the question need not be answered. A complicated set of paraphernalia used in the impersonation of "spirits" was exhibited in court. But, in spite of such evidence of fraud, one of the guests arrested with the Greens testified that she had been in communication with her departed husband in various ways, and that "grandpa"

was an Indian chief materialized—the original chief of the Black Hawks, in fact!

Before we leave the subject, we shall bring to the attention of readers interested in things Spiritistic a book published twelve years ago, and now in its fifth edition. The title is *Behind the Scenes with the Mediums*, and the author, David P. Abbott. Mr. Abbott can imitate all the tricks of Spiritists, and here demonstrates how he does it. He has been about among the mediums, and explains all their devices. Sealed envelopes, slate messages, tappings and luminous clouds have no terrors or mysteries for him. The lady who shudders when the Great Madame Mizpah gives her name and address without asking a question, and the gentleman who reads with avidity the letter written by his deceased wife, can here discover the manner in which these "miracles" are achieved. One of the most diverting parts of Mr. Abbott's book is concerned with fashions in Spiritism:

"As soon as the first mediums could induce the spirits of the departed to return to earth and rap on the tables and furniture, the fashion rapidly spread, and mediums all over the country sprang up with exactly these same powers. . . . As soon as a leading medium spoke of his magnetic powers, all of the mediums in the country had magnetic powers, which, strange to say, could act on wood, and could also act in ways in which magnetism was never known to act. As soon as a leading medium started the fashion of having an Indian 'guide' [familiar spirit], all of the mediums in the country had Indian guides." "A medium once told me," says Mr. Abbott, "that the public never knew half of the money that is gathered by mediums. . . . He also said that it was not the common people who are the best patrons of mediums, but doctors, law-

yers, merchants, teachers, and the more intelligent class of persons”—the people, in other words, who have acquired some culture, and have paid for it by apostasy from the faith of their childhood.

From David Abbott's *expose* it may be inferred that belief in the genuineness of spirit manifestations, clairvoyancy and other forms of magic, is induced in two ways: first, by the skill of the performer, and, second, by the inability of the victim to observe what really takes place. Even the initiated have to be on their guard to avoid being taken in. Indeed, a part of the mediums' skill consists in producing that confusion of mind which makes the visitor an easy prey. It is possible, for example, for one person to pretend to have both his hands in contact with those of another, while all the while one of them is free to fan the air, to move musical instruments about, and to strike the dupe on the face and head. Extraordinary pains are taken to prearrange the manifestations of the seance. Many of the audience-chambers of the Spiritists are fitted with elaborate contrivances—curtains, trap-doors and concealed entrances which hide and admit confederates. One medium uses “many elegant costumes, all made of the finest silk.” He has one piece “consisting of twenty-one yards of the finest white French bridal veiling, which can be contained in a pint cup.” This, after having been painted with a luminous fluid, brings the spirit world into the most dingy hall. And in all performances the means employed to confuse and distract the witness are varied.

Then, too, clairvoyants often have a detective system by which they learn the circumstances of their clients. When in doubt about what to say they may make assertions with a rising inflection of the voice; and in this way they get involuntary answers. The visitor will

probably deny afterwards that he has made any response. "Systems of pumping or fishing are an art with mediums, and they grow very expert at it, and do it so naturally that it takes an expert to detect that he himself is giving the medium information."

The New York *Nation* said in a review of Mr. Abbott's book: "The author's disclosures should make any unbiased reader more than ever skeptical as to even the best authenticated stories of modern miracles. The professional medium may not earn his money honestly, but he earns it by great cleverness and industry. Men who have had a limited experience of the world are unfitted to outwit such shrewd and nimble-fingered men and women."

## CHAPTER FIVE.

### Science and the Seance.

IN view of the facts adduced in the preceding chapter, the attitude of those who hold that Spiritism is simply a delusion, and that all its phenomena are based on fraud and trickery, is readily understood. So frequent have been the exposures of mediums; so openly do the advertisements and claims of many others bear the stamp of charlatanry on their foreheads; so many have turned against their *confreres* and, on the public platform, confessed themselves penitent cheats and humbugs; so successfully have most of the phenomena of the seance been imitated by sleight-of-hand performers and popular "magicians"—that no other attitude but that of an intense skepticism appears justifiable in the light of common sense. All mediums are frauds, and the adherents of the cult, their deluded dupes—such seems, to most students of the problem, a more reasonable position to take than the assumption that the departed spirits are in communion with the living, and for such purpose employ certain sensitized persons called "mediums."

The great majority of those who deny the genuineness of Spiritistic phenomena, in each given instance of spirit revelations assume, *as an axiom*, the unreality of spirit communication, and, reasoning from this major premise, proceed to demonstrate the probable method by which the result has been obtained. That there was

deception is regarded as a valid presumption in every case. It only remains to be shown how the medium worked her trick, or how she obtained the information which she (or he) announces as a spirit revelation.

Typical of this attitude over against the Spiritist doctrine are the following "common-sense" explanations of the manner in which the presumable deception was worked in given instances.

In the *Record-Herald* (Chicago) of Dec. 1, 1901, a contributor added his experiences to a symposium on Spiritist manifestations, as follows:\*

"I read with a great deal of interest 'The Confessions of Mrs. Piper,' which you published some time ago; also the article on Professor Hyslop in last Sunday's edition of the RECORD-HERALD. The most important question ever asked in this world is: 'If a man die, shall he live again?' and it is as new to-day as it was in the times of Job.

"A few months since I lost my wife. It seemed as if the whole earth had fallen from beneath me. I had a Christian's faith that she had gone to the Christian's heaven, but there are times when faith weakens and stricken mortals cry out for something more. Believing is not knowing. I began to doubt. Would I ever meet my wife again? If so, would I know her, love her? There was no answer to my doubts and my fears. I could only suffer.

"One day a friend called on me. He had lost his wife years before, and sympathized with me. In the

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\*The *Record-Herald* introduced this story with the following editorial remarks: "The recent articles in the SUNDAY RECORD-HERALD regarding Mrs. Piper, Professor Hyslop, Spiritualism and telepathy have attracted wide attention, and, as it were, have centered public attention in a measure on the future state. Another remarkable addition to the series is herewith presented. The SUNDAY RECORD-HERALD is not permitted to publish the name of the writer, but it can assure its readers that he is trustworthy, and, while not highly distinguished, is still a man of some mark in the political and literary world. His story is notable in many respects, and is worthy the consideration of an investigating public."

agony of my heart I cried out, ‘Oh, if I only knew my wife yet lived! I believe, but I do not know.’

“He looked at me curiously, and then asked: ‘B——, what would you give to know that your wife lives, to even talk with her?’

“‘Give! I would give anything, if such a thing were possible,’ was my answer.

“‘It is possible,’ he responded quietly; ‘I have talked with my wife since she died.’

“I could only stare at him in amazement, but at last managed to ejaculate: ‘Are you crazy?’

“‘Not in the least,’ he responded; ‘but there is a medium—’

“He then told me of a medium in the city who had extraordinary powers. She was not a public medium—in fact, it was hard work to get a sitting with her. If he could arrange a sitting, would I go, if nothing more than for curiosity?

“‘Yes.’

“It took him two months before he arranged the sitting. It was to be in the evening. I took another friend with me, a cool, hard-headed man. He had lost a son some years before, but believed in Spiritualism no more than I did—in fact, was inclined to take a materialistic view of things.

“We found the medium to be a pleasant-faced woman, apparently about forty years of age. She was slender and looked to be in delicate health. She was modest and retiring and seemed averse to speak of her powers. With her were two young women, one her daughter.

“The room in which the sitting took place was an ordinary parlor off of the sitting-room. The room, from a casual observation, had no furniture except a center-table and some chairs. There was nothing on

the center-table except a very ordinary-looking tin horn. I picked it up and looked at it. It was made in three sections, so as to close up like a telescope. When opened its full length it was about eighteen inches long.

"I asked the medium what it was for. She replied that it was to collect the tones of the spirit's voice, and render it more audible.

"There were six of us in the room—the medium, two young ladies, my two friends, and myself. We were seated around the center-table, each lady placing her hands on her knees and a gentleman placing his hands over hers, so that she could not stir or move without the gentleman holding her hands knowing it. I can only vouch for the young lady whose hands I held. She did not move during the whole seance. My friends say the same of the ladies whose hands they held.

"When we were told how to sit, the medium extinguished the lights, and we were in the dark. In the case of Mrs. Piper all chances of fraud were eliminated. Here, I am free to confess, they were not. Yet what happened was so much more remarkable than anything told by Professor Hyslop that, even suspecting fraud, it still remains inexplicable.

"After we had become seated, and the lights were turned off, the medium asked the young ladies to sing. They sang, in low, sweet tones, that well-known hymn, 'Shall We Gather at the River?'

"The hymn finished, we sat for a short time in silence, when I heard the horn move, then a sound as if it had been taken from the table. A moment afterward I received three sharp taps on my left breast.

"Then came an audible voice, perfectly distinct, but speaking in an aspirate tone. Then came in suc-

cession what purported to be the spirits of a son, a daughter and the wife of my Spiritualistic friend, and they held quite extended conversations.

"But this article has to do with only what happened to myself. My thoughts were now entirely on my wife. Would she come? Was it a hoax my Spiritualistic friend was playing on me?

"When one spirit got through with the horn we could hear it placed back on the table, and another would take it up. Sometimes it would sound as if dropped quite a distance.

"At last the horn was taken up, and then came the words, as plainly as if spoken by a living person:

"'Papa! Papa! Papa!'

"Still, with my entire thoughts fixed on my wife, I had no idea that the message was for me.

"'Is that you, G——?' asked my Spiritualistic friend, thinking his son had returned.

"'No, no! I don't want you,' was the answer.

"Then my other friend, thinking of the boy he lost, asked: 'Is it I you want?'

"'No, no! I don't want you.'

"Then, much perplexed, I asked: 'Is it I you want?'

"'Yes, yes! Oh, papa, how glad I am to see you.'

"'Who is it?' I asked, astounded.

"'I—'

"It was the name of a little boy I had lost years before while residing in a neighboring State. No one present, not even my friends, knew I ever had such a child. I had not been thinking of him—had not thought of him for weeks. It was only of my wife I was thinking. Still with my thoughts full of her, I asked:

"'Where is your mother?'

"'She is here. She is going to talk to you pres-

ently. Oh, papa, how glad I am for this opportunity to talk with you. I am happy, perfectly happy.'

"Every word was distinctly spoken.

"After another spirit had talked there came in lower tones, but distinct: 'A——; it's A——,' the name of my wife.

"Now here was a peculiarity. During her last illness my wife almost always alluded to herself in the third person. It was 'A—— wants this,' instead of, 'I want it.'

"'Oh, A——, is this you? Can it be you?' I asked in a doubting voice.

"'B——, don't doubt! don't doubt!' was the answer, in an aggrieved voice.

"'A——, if this be you, can you tell me what happened before you died and where you died?'

"'I died away from home in a hospital, but don't talk about it. I can't talk about it. B——, don't grieve so over my death. I am happy. The children are here. Mother is here.'

"Then came the sudden query: 'B——, what did you do with my things? Don't you remember when you went up in the chamber and opened my trunk and took out my black dress and looked at it and cried so? I was right by you then.'

"A few days after her burial I had gone alone to her trunk, took out her things, and, unfolding a black dress which she was accustomed to wear, had shed many burning tears over it. But the circumstance had passed from my mind. Certainly I had not thought of it for days.

"She then bade me good-by, saying she would talk to me again before I went away.

"After two or three other so-called spirits had talked, the words 'Papa!' 'Papa!' again were heard.

" 'Is that you, I——?' I asked.

" 'No, it's E——.'

"It was the name of a little girl I had lost some seven years before.

" 'Why, E——,' I answered, 'you can't remember me; you were scarcely more than a year old when you died.'

" 'But I have seen you since and loved you. Now I have talked with you I shall love you more than ever. Oh, papa, how glad I am to see you, and talk with you.'

"There now came the sound of two kisses. The kisses were not pressed to my lips or cheek, but seemed to be a foot or two away.

" 'E——, is your mother there yet?'

" 'Yes, and she will talk with you again presently. Isn't she a nice, sweet mamma? Papa, when mamma died I was there. Don't you remember after she died, and you went to go out of the room, you nearly fell, and the doctor caught you, and told you not to grieve so; mamma was better off?'

"A true circumstance, but one I had entirely forgotten, for the same thing had been told me by many others. Could this have been telepathy, something entirely forgotten by me?

"I then said, 'Darling, I have a picture of you at home.'

" 'Yes, it hangs over your desk. Isn't it cute? Now, good-by, papa, and God bless you.'

"My wife came again. She said:

" 'Oh, B——, how I bless you for coming here to talk with me! Is it not wonderful we can talk? How glad I am you came. B——, don't, don't grieve over me. Mother is here. Your father and brother are here. Uncle is here, the children are here. We are

all together, and all so happy. I can't talk any more now, but do, B——, come again, and I will write you a communication. Good-by, and God bless you.'

"The above are the facts as they actually occurred. I have no explanation to offer. One of three things must be true. The voices were from the other world, the medium had a confederate concealed who did the talking, or she herself was an accomplished ventriloquist.

"Even admitting fraud, by what power were the answers given? There was no hesitation. The talk was as natural as if the person had been before me. I know not what to think; it is natural for man to doubt. I doubt. Would I still doubt if one were raised from the dead?—B."

If the writer of this report had no explanation to offer, he was manifestly impressed by the intimate knowledge which the medium displayed concerning matters which no one but the writer might be presumed to remember. The article was read by one who was skeptical regarding the Spiritistic claim, and who had an explanation. He addressed the same paper a week later, as follows:

"In the RECORD-HERALD of last Sunday a gentleman relates how he conversed with his wife's spirit through the aid of a medium.

"The investigator was all but convinced of the reliability of the test, because the alleged spirits of his wife and children recalled several incidents that had passed out of his mind. During his wife's illness he had stumbled in leaving her sick-room, and had been caught by the doctor. This incident was recalled by the spirit of a daughter who had died seven years before the mother at the age of one year, but had seen the accident from the spirit world. The wife recalled

the fact that after her death the husband had gone to her trunk, taken out a dress and cried over it. The one-year-old child—strange that it could speak\*—also called his attention to the fact that her picture hung over his desk.

“The spirits told nothing about their world, nothing of consequence, apparently, except that they were together and happy; but they urged the husband and father to call again, presumably through the same medium.

“This test was made under the usual conditions imposed by Spiritualistic mediums, with a dark room, a mysterious trumpet that floated about in the air, and with a group of six persons touching hands in a circle about a table. The medium was aided by two young ladies, one of them her daughter, and the investigator was accompanied by two friends. We see here only such conditions as have been exposed a hundred times as trickery. The investigator argues that the medium could not have known of the incidents recalled by the alleged spirits.

“But he explains the sitting was made through a friend, a believer in Spiritualism, who told him it was ‘hard work to get a sitting’ because the woman was not a public medium. The writer says: ‘It took him two months to arrange the sitting.’ The skeptic naturally concludes the medium improved those two months to ‘work up some material’ to impress her prospective customer.

“This is not an uncommon practise, and there is nothing wonderful in the experience of this gentleman. He was much wrought up over the loss of his wife,

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\*A common occurrence in “spirit” communications. Spiritists do not find that at all remarkable, since the spirits are believed to develop mentally, and also in their spirit body, after death.

and might have been convinced by a clever medium without the knowledge of specific incidents in his life, supposed to be known to no other present, though he may have casually mentioned them to some friend months before, and forgotten that fact."

All of which is undoubtedly true, as far as it goes. But does it go far enough? "We see here only such conditions as have been exposed a hundred times as trickery." Does that prove trickery in the present instance? The information might have been "worked up" during the two months. Indeed, such is a common practise among mediums, and it looks like a reasonable assumption in this case. But where is the *evidence* of fraud? Undoubtedly, Spiritists would reason thus: Some doctors of medicine are quacks—does this prove that my house physician is a quack? Some lawyers build their practise on methods that would not bear the light—does that prove that my attorney is a crook? Some mediums have been exposed as shams—does that prove that there are no genuine cases of spirit control?

The conversion of the American poetess, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, to Spiritism, has been referred to. When she came to England after losing her husband in the war, she said in a public statement:

"For more than a year I sought for the fulfillment of the compact.\* During that period I moved from place to place, seeking contact with, and experiments with, all sorts of psychics and mediums. Some curious phenomena were displayed for my benefit, but always I came away unsatisfied and uncertain. Yet in those awful days and weeks and months I knew my husband was living, and longing to communicate with me.

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\*She had an agreement with her husband that whichever should die first would get into mediumistic communication with the other.

"It was in the early evening of Sept. 10, 1917, that the door suddenly opened. I was experimenting with a ouija-board when a friend called, and, in a light and merry mood, placed her hands on the board. In that moment the board seemed to leap into life. Messages were spelt out at a rate we were quite unable to follow, and they were of a character which left no doubt in my mind that I was at last in touch with my husband. They were calm, practical and reassuring—not the useless and meaningless phrases too often put forward by false mediums as being communications from the dead.

"I have dealt with this matter fully in my book *The Worlds and I*, which will be published shortly. As yet, we are only at the fringe of the great problem. We can and shall make progress in this, as in other problems. The world war has given a great impetus to the study.

"I have been asked why a material object, such as ouija-board, should be necessary for communication between husband and wife. Well, if only a street separates them in the material world, they need a telephone or some other medium of communication. They call up an operator to connect the wires—an operator who may not possess any special culture, but who knows how to connect wires. There is nothing more impossible in the use of a clairvoyant or a ouija-board in the one case, than the use of wires in the other."

This story called forth the following reply from Mr. Albert C. White, a British scientist of some note:

"The very nature and quality of the proofs advanced in its support predispose one to skepticism of the assumption of Spiritualism. The case mentioned by Mrs. Wilcox is typical. Here is a lady who experi-

ences for ‘awful days and weeks and months’ anxiety to communicate with her husband, who has died.

“She takes great pains to achieve her desire.

“Her efforts are fruitless.

“Suddenly a lady friend of hers, ‘in light and merry mood,’ places her hands on a ouija-board, and, lo! the long-sought communication is established. The thing is as preposterous as it sounds.

“If it is asked, ‘How do you account for the automatic writing?’ I answer, first, that such writing has been accounted for on occasions by anything but supernormal intervention; and that, secondly, such intervention is inconsistent with its character.

“What was that character in this case?

“It was—

“(1) Dependent on the offices of a lady ‘in a light and merry mood,’ but irresponsible to the efforts of ‘awful days and weeks and months’ of earnest inquiry.

“(2) ‘Spelt out at a rate we were quite unable to follow,’ and yet was

“(3) ‘Calm, practical and reassuring.’

“The evidence for communication with the dead is generally of a similar character, and is dependent on certain external agencies as to the reliability of which the hostile witnesses are overwhelming, both in numbers and authority.

“It is an undoubted fact that many intelligent persons have, as a result of psychic experiments, become confident that it is possible to erect a bridge ‘across the void’ of death. But nearly all such converts to Spiritualism will admit, if they are questioned closely, that they base that confidence on their inability to find any other or better explanation of the phenomena they have witnessed than that of the Spiritualists.

"That is to say, their confidence is based on an assumption.

"The history of mankind is a record of discovery. What the men of yesterday regarded as miraculous the men of to-day accept as material. There are still mighty tracks of unexplored country, as to which science is silent. But every day it is exploring and learning and teaching more. To the rational mind there is only one course to adopt in the face of new facts: It is the course of investigation and of reasoning from the basis of the known.

"To those who, like the present writer, adopt that course, Spiritualistic phenomena appear to contradict all we know of physical science and natural law.

"Sometimes we are frankly puzzled. But the last thing that occurs to us as reasonable in such circumstances is to forthwith assume the truth of the most unreasonable 'explanation' of the puzzle with which we are acquainted."

Once more we ask: Granted that the agencies by means of which spirit communications are obtained have been proved unreliable in a vast number of cases, does this circumstance militate against the genuineness of the tests in a given instance? The critic accuses the adherents of Spiritism as basing their conclusions on an assumption; viz., the inability to find a better explanation of mediumistic phenomena than the Spiritualistic one. But is not his own skepticism based on an assumption as large as that of the Spiritists; viz., that the possibility of spirit control is "unreasonable," "the most unreasonable explanation" of all? Here is an *a-priori* judgment, and no such judgment can stand in the forum of science. The critic himself says: "The history of mankind is a record of discovery"—which reminds us of the derision with which scientists have

greeted practically every advance in the various domains of knowledge when first reported (for instance, the discovery of bacteria by Pasteur, vaccination, Dr. Carrel's treatment of deep wounds, etc.), because utterly "unreasonable" and out of harmony with "the known."

But let us approach the problem a little more closely. What is the present attitude of scientific thought on the matter of psychic phenomena? Scientists are divided into three distinct camps in their judgment of Spiritism.

1. There is one group which is convinced of the genuineness of these phenomena, and, moreover, believes them to be caused by "unembodied intelligences," possibly the spirits of the departed. Among these sponsors of the Spiritistic doctrine there are several Englishmen of great prominence in the scientific world, such as Sir Oliver Lodge, Prof. Frederick H. Myers, the late Alfred Russel Wallace, and the late Professor Crookes. Some hold the Spiritistic position (that the spirits of the dead are the "intelligences" in question) to be proved through the most exacting tests which modern science can devise.

2. The great mass of scientific students of this problem maintain a stoutly negative attitude. The testimony of such men as Lodge and Crookes does not shake them in their skepticism. Says Albert C. White:

"It is quite usual to mention Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Barrett and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, in order to give what looks like scientific sanction to spook-hunting. But the eminence of these gentlemen in their own departments of science or literature is nothing to the point. It may be safely asserted that the overwhelming majority of men of science in this country

and in Europe are in opposition to Sir Oliver Lodge and his friends in this matter."

Typical of this skeptical attitude is the following article by E. W. Scripture, Ph.D., M.D., of the Yale Psychological Laboratory, which appeared in the *Independent* some years ago:

"In every large city there are hundreds of Spiritualistic mediums who make their living by receiving messages from the dead, by predicting the future, etc. Their mysterious rappings, rope-tying, cabinet manifestations, slate-writing, letter-reading and so on are more wonderful than the dynamo, more startling than wireless telegraphy, more fascinating than the flying-machine. The problems they solve are the most important of all. The turbine steamer bridges the Atlantic, but Spiritualism opens an excursion route across the Styx. The telephone enables us to talk with our friends a thousand miles away, but the medium lets us communicate with the souls of the departed. Their results even prove the immortality of the soul. Every man must put the question to himself: Are these not the most important phenomena in the world to which I should give my attention? And my money, also? Shouldn't there be richly endowed 'professors,' who should devote their entire time to such investigations?"

"It is no light task to collect a census of coincidental experiences having scientific value for proving the supernormal, and it should have the financial support commensurate with its importance on any theory whatsoever of the facts' (Hyslop).

"The answer is, Yes, if a single one can be proved to be free of trickery or gross blundering.

"I can not here enter on any discussion of the usual phenomena of Spiritualism; they have, one and all, been shown to be tricks—tricks so clever that it is

well worth an occasional dollar to be taken in by them. Mr. Abbott, in a fascinating book, *Behind the Scenes with the Mediums*, has given complete inside information concerning all the medium's work. Many of these secrets are sold by mediums to pupils at prices from \$2.50 to \$98 (marked down). Mr. Abbott was obliged to pay for a number of them. Carrington, in *The Physical Phenomena of Spiritism*, also gives some excellent descriptions. Hereafter every man can become his own medium.

"Does any educated person still believe in these things? 'Professor' Camille Flammarion, Director of the Observatory of Jovis, does. 'I purpose to show in this book, *Mysterious Psychic Forces*, what truth there is in the phenomena of table-turning, table-movings and table-rappings, in the communications received therefrom, in levitations that contradict the laws of gravity, etc., etc.' 'Mediumistic experiences might form (and doubtless soon will form) a chapter in physics.' He gives photographs of tables suspended in the air by the mystic force of Eusapia Palladino. The medium commands a 'spirit' to raise the table. 'This being appears to come into existence and then become non-existent as soon as the experiment is ended.' Professor Crookes, the celebrated chemist, believes in the movement of heavy substances when at a distance from the medium, in the rising of tables and chairs off the ground without contact with any person, in human beings rising and floating about, in the appearance of disconnected hands either self-luminous or visible by ordinary light, in a bell passing through the wall of a room and a flower passing through a table, in the creation of a lifelike figure, 'Katie,' who sobbed, talked, shook hands, and even submitted to a 'gentlemanly' embrace. Professor Milesi believes in self-

playing mandolins, in pianos that jump up and down, etc. Professor Palmieri felt himself embraced by his dead daughter and everybody heard the sound of a kiss. Professor Richet believes in anything that comes along.

“Professor Hyslop [*The Widow’s Mite, Science and the Future Life, Borderland of Psychical Research, Enigmas of Psychical Research*] believes in certain ‘clairvoyant’ persons who can perceive objects or scenes at a distance and without any of the normal impressions of sense, in the appearance of ‘apparitions’ of dead persons, in dreams that reveal events happening at a distance, in telepathy or the direct communication of one mind with another, in ‘crystal gazing,’ or the ‘supernormal’ acquisition of knowledge by looking at a bright object, in premonitions of future events, etc., etc. In fact, there seems to be very little left that he won’t believe. Yet, like my clever friend, the showman, ‘Professor’ Baldwin, the White Mahatma, he is addicted to such phrases as ‘the matter is supernormal,’ and to indicating that some mysterious force is at work whose nature we do not yet know (and for whose investigation we need endowed professors).

“Let us accept Professor Hyslop’s challenge: ‘It is high time that investigations of this kind should be endowed as are many others of less importance. . . . They will spend millions in North Pole expeditions, in deep-sea dredging for a new fish, in biological inquiries to show a protoplasmic source of life, and in astronomic observations that lead only to speculation about planetary life—in short, anything to throw light on man’s origin, but not a cent to ascertain with any scientific assurance a word about his destiny.’

“The problems of man’s destiny, of a possible future life, of extraordinary powers of foreseeing

events, of seeing things at a distance with a spiritual eye, etc., are certainly far more worthy of investigation than any problems now undertaken. But—these problems *have* been undertaken; money *has* been spent; a whole society for psychical research has been hard at work for twenty-five years; whole series of volumes have been published. And—the result has been entirely negative; not one single fact bearing on any of the problems has been established. At the present time there is money by the barrelful for any one who will produce even the shadow of a fact of this kind. Show me a person who by premonition will predict a rise in stocks and I make him a multimillionaire over night. One who could by clairvoyance see what is happening at a distance wouldn't need to work for a living. If telepathy, or thought transference, had even the most microscopic foundation in fact, it would be instantly commercialized as a rival to telegraphy, telephony, and even the postal service. Show the world even the faintest hope of trustworthy investigations of the immortality of the soul, and the whole body of scientific men would plunge into the work. The mountain has been in labor for such a long time, and it has brought forth not even a mouse.

"But why do the professors still believe? Let us be just; they don't. Out of all this magnificent body of men (just think of Koch, Virchow, Röntgen, Behring, and the thousands of other great names!) Dr. Funk can find only ten to mention as believers in these vagaries. Among them there is not a single German and not a Frenchman of prominence. Of the Englishmen, the famous chemist Crookes is like a child in his simple faith and careless experiments as soon as he leaves his own domain. The three Americans we will leave to their colleagues.

"Why do these few remainders believe contrary to all evidence?

"A study of their characters will show the reason. One of them, a professor of psychiatry, has written books on insanity, genius and criminality that have been brilliant, startling and original, but in every respect utterly devoid of scientific worth; every thesis proved by him could just as well have been disproved by the very facts he collected. Another is a professor of physiology in a world-famed university. No kinder, simpler, more charming man ever lived; full of enthusiasm and ambition to discover some great truth, his very sincerity and simplicity render him an easy prey to the clever schemer. I have seen him, after a test of a musical prodigy, clasp the child to his breast with enthusiastic tears—whereas the audience had seen the mother's tricks.

"A university life is in some respects like that of a monastery; the inmates are to a great degree protected from the evil world outside. The standards of ethics are higher, and there is greater faith in one's fellowmen. Every swindler knows that a college professor is usually an 'easy mark.' It is only natural that among such men there are a few who are caught by the Spiritualistic and telepathic humbugs—and once caught in print, with true academic obstinacy, never back down on what they have said."

3. A third group of scientists occupy intermediate ground. They make free admission that certain phenomena connected with mediumism are genuine, and, moreover, are not explicable by any reference to known physical laws. But they believe that the Spiritualistic interpretation of these facts is quite out of harmony with experimental science, since the agency of disembodied spirits assumes the persistence of personality

after death; in other words, assumes the immortality of the soul. And that is an "unscientific" assumption! Modern science is materialistic. It denies the existence of spirit. There is in man no such thing as a "vital principle"—a "soul." Hence there can be no life after death, and, hence, no spirit communication. The phenomena of mediumship are explained as operations of a mysterious "*psychic force*."

As a representative of this group we shall quote Thomson J. Hudson, Ph.D., LL.D., who wrote in 1902. It will be noted that Dr. Hudson views even the assumption of a "*psychic force*" as opening the way for a reversal of scientific opinion regarding the immortality of the soul.

"Many years of time and oceans of ink have been wasted in the discussion of the physical phenomena of Spiritism, such as table-tipping, levitation, slate-writing, etc., each side taking it for granted that the whole question of Spiritism could be settled forever by proving, on the one hand, or disproving on the other, the supernormal character of the phenomena. During nearly half a century the evidence for Spiritism was practically confined to that class of phenomena. If a table was levitated without physical contact or mechanical appliances, Spiritists proclaimed and believed it to be demonstrative proof that spirits of the dead communicate with the living. Nor was this estimate of evidential values confined to the rank and file of Spiritists. Learned professors, doctors and even lawyers were carried off their logical feet by seeing tables lifted into the air and chairs carried about the room by invisible hands.

"Thus the late Dr. Hare, of Philadelphia, emeritus professor of chemistry in the University of Pennsylvania, fell an easy victim to that species of logic in

the early days of Spiritism. Commencing his investigations as a skeptic, he constructed several ingenious machines by which he was able to demonstrate the existence of a force in man capable of moving ponderable bodies without physical contact (telekinesis\*), and then he immediately rushed into print with a book entitled *Spiritualism Scientifically Demonstrated*. That Professor Hare should fall into such an error may be accounted for by the fact that in his day no other than the Spiritistic hypothesis had been seriously advanced to account for the facts. Besides, scientists in those days generally contented themselves by simply denying the existence of the phenomena and refusing to investigate, which was a tacit admission that if phenomena were true, the Spiritistic explanation followed. The result was that those who did investigate and verified the phenomena naturally felt justified in accepting the only explanation offered. It followed as a natural consequence that the great body of Spiritists believed, and they still believe, that the claims of Spiritism are demonstrated to be true by the phenomena of telekinesis.

"Nor is it at all strange that the rank and file should so believe since they have such modern examples as are found in the attitude of such scientists as Alfred Russel Wallace and Sir William Crookes. Each of these eminent savants verified the physical phenomena of Spiritism, especially telekinesis, by indubitable tests, and each ended by declaring himself a convert to Spiritism. No one can doubt the ability of either of these gentlemen to make correct observations of facts when conducting a scientific investigation, for they were both trained in the strictest schools of scientific

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\*Tele—distance; kinesis—moving force; a force able to produce motion at a distance, without contact.

inquiry. So, when they tell us that they have verified the fact that ponderable bodies can be moved without physical contact, and describe and illustrate the process of verification, *we are bound to believe them*. But when they assume to draw conclusions from those facts, their reputation for habits of close scientific observation of mere phenomena no longer commands confidence, for it is one thing to be a close observer of facts, and quite a different thing to be able to draw a correct conclusion from those facts. In other words, it does not necessarily follow that a scientist is also a logician. In point of fact it often happens that the closest and most minute observers of facts are the least competent to formulate from them a correct generalization, or to estimate their evidential value. A striking example is found in Sir William Crookes, in his treatment of psychic phenomena in general, and telekinesis in particular, and the example becomes still more striking when his conclusions are contrasted with those of his collaborators, Sergt. Edward W. Cox and Dr. Huggins, F. R. S., in whose presence the tests were made.

"Professor Crookes, the scientist, eminent as the discoverer of a new metal, and as having rendered possible the discovery of the Röntgen rays, devised the instruments of precision by which telekinesis was demonstrated, made the experiments and became a Spiritualist. Sergeant Cox, an eminent lawyer, skilled in logic, practised in the art of testing truth, detecting falsehood and estimating evidential values, observed the same facts, and found that they excluded Spiritism as a factor in the case. They both agreed, however, that their experiments demonstrated the existence in man of a hitherto unrecognized force, which they agreed in designating as 'psychic force'—'a force emanating from, or in some manner directly dependent

on, the human organization.' In this they both agreed, although they ultimately disagreed as to whether the co-operation of the spirits of the dead was necessary to set the force in motion. Sergeant Cox mentioned eighteen characteristics of the phenomena as developed in the experiments made in his presence, each of which was wholly inconsistent with the Spiritistic theory. Professor Crookes, on the other hand, ultimately concluded that the Spiritistic theory was the only tenable one. I do not say that this particular series of experiments converted him to Spiritism, but I do say that in all his public utterances on the subject there is not the slightest evidence to show that his conversion was brought about by the observation of any other than the purely physical phenomena of Spiritism. And it is against the acceptance of this character and quality of evidence for Spiritism that I protest in the name of outraged science, logic and reason. Why?

"1. Because the existence of a 'psychic force,' inherent in the human organism, a force capable of levitating heavy tables or other ponderable bodies without physical contact, is amply sufficient to account for all the purely physical phenomena of Spiritism. Obviously a physical force that is great enough to lift a table is great enough to produce any of the minor physical phenomena, such as slate-writing, etc. In either case the force is guided by intelligence—presumably that of the medium—until the contrary is shown by competent evidence.

"2. There is nothing in the purely physical phenomena of Spiritism that proves or disproves the Spiritistic hypothesis. The proof of the existence of psychic force, however, does, as Sergeant Cox justly remarks, 'shake to its foundation the materialism of modern science by the probability it raises that, as a

fact in nature, there is in us an entity, distinct from the corporeal structure, which can exercise an active force, directed by intelligence, beyond the limits of the bodily powers.' He might have added that it also raises the presumption that this intelligent entity survives the dissolution of the body, and that, therefore, spirits do exist beyond the grave. This much, in all candor, must be conceded to Spiritism. But it is one thing to create a presumption in favor of a life after death, and quite another to prove that spirits of the dead communicate messages to the living through mediums.

"And this is the crucial question raised by Spiritism —Do spirits of the dead communicate with the living through mediums?"

Professor Thury, of Geneva, believed that the phenomena are due to an invisible fluid which he called "psychode." J. H. Fichte assumed the existence of an hitherto unknown vital force—"V. F." Du Prel coined the name "Od-force."

However, this assumption of a psychic force, hitherto unsuspected and only known through mediumism in our own day, has not found favor with the great majority of scientists. It has been pertinently objected that the existence of such a force, acting out of conformity (as in levitation and telekinesis, for instance) with the law of gravitation, *would constitute an exception to the universal law of the preservation of energy, and the essential oneness of all natural forces.* As Dr. Wille, professor of psychiatry in Basle, says, in *Der Spiritismus der Gegenwart* (quoted in *Lehre und Wehre*, Vol. XLVI., p. 50): "The fundamental law of all natural phenomena, the law of the preservation of energy and convertibility of natural forces, justifies us in rejecting the notion of new, unknown natural forces.

And if there should be forces unknown to us, we may not predicate of them functions which truly contradict the working of all forces and laws now known to us [as would be the case if Spiritistic phenomena—materializations, levitations, for instance—were due to a hitherto unknown psychic force]. The perfect law observable these thousands of years in natural phenomena forces us, on philosophic and scientific grounds, to reject the idea of such new forces; all the more so since the action of such unknown forces has never been demonstrated outside of Spiritism." In this opinion Dr. Wille voices what is practically the consensus of scientific men to-day. "Psychic force" has found no acceptance among anthropologists, nor among physi-  
cists; it remains an unproved hypothesis, at best.

Some investigators have sought in certain obscure and abnormal functionings of the human brain a point of contact which would explain actions of the medium under "spirit control." They point out the resemblance to the instances of "secondary" or "multiple" personality, which recent research has discovered in such numbers, and which are due to perfectly natural, if often obscure, causes. In these, as a result of illness, a blow, a shock, or some other unusual stimulus, there is a partial or complete effacement of the original personality of the victim, and its replacement by a new personality, sometimes of radically different characteristics from the normal self. A sufficient example is the case of the Rev. Thomas C. Hanna, for knowledge of which the scientific world is indebted to Dr. Boris Sidis. Following a fall from his carriage, Hanna, a Connecticut clergyman, lost all consciousness of his identity, had no memory for the events of his life prior to the accident, recognized none of his friends, could not read or write, nor so much as walk or talk—was, in fact,

like a child new born. On the other hand, as soon as the rudiments of education were acquired by him once more, he showed himself the possessor of a vigorous, independent, self-reliant personality, lacking all knowledge of the original personality, but still able to adapt himself readily to his environment, and make headway in the world. Ultimately, through methods that are distinctively modern, Dr. Sidis was able to recall the vanished self, and, fusing the secondary self with it, restore the clergyman to his former sphere of usefulness, a normal, entire man. Now, the assumption is that it is possible *to create*, by an effort of the will, under favorable conditions, such a secondary self as is produced in some cases of severe illness or accident, and, furthermore, that such secondary selves may be made to assume the characteristics of real persons that have died. The strange case of Lurancy Vannum was thus explained by Richard Hodgson, of the Society of Psychical Research. There is on record, also, an instance of mediumship in which the medium, an amateur investigator of the phenomena of Spiritism, clearly recognized that his various impersonations were suggested to him by the spectators. This man, Charles H. Tout, a Vancouver schoolmaster, records that after attending a few seances with some friends he felt a strong impulse to turn medium himself, and assume a foreign personality. Yielding to the impulse, he discovered, much to his amazement, that, without losing complete control of his consciousness, he could develop a secondary self which would impose on the beholders as a discarnate "spirit." On one occasion he thus acted in a semi-conscious way the part of a dead woman, the mother of a friend present, and the impersonation was accepted as a genuine case of "spirit" control. On another, having given several successful

impersonations, he suddenly felt weak and ill, and almost fell to the floor.

Professor Myers, of Cambridge, in the course of his Psychical Research activities, gradually became convinced that over and beyond the self of which man is normally conscious there existed in every man a secondary self, endowed with faculties transcending those of the normal wakeaday self. To this he gave the name of the "subliminal self." In its practical working-out, this theory is identical with Dr. Carpenter's "unconscious cerebration" hypothesis, by means of which he endeavored to account for various kinds of psychical manifestations. The British Spiritist leader, Horace Leaf, remarks: "The way he applied this undoubtedly useful discovery is often quite amusing, involving him in difficulties far greater than the one he was endeavoring to solve. By unconscious cerebration he meant that there were often unconscious actions performed, both physically and mentally, that might lead the investigator to suppose that it was not he, but some extraneous entity, performing the action or expressing the thought. In applying it to table-tilting and planchette-writing, Carpenter would be to a large extent correct. Spiritists are, as a rule, quite prepared to admit that under certain circumstances much may influence the phenomena which comes only from the experimenter's own subconsciousness. But how it can explain the movements of objects at a distance from the medium or the materialization of a spirit form, it is impossible to conceive." (*What Is This Spiritualism?* p. 19f.) In this opinion, we can not but agree with Mr. Leaf.

To sum up: The "scientific" explanations of Spiritistic phenomena are either themselves based on unproved assumptions ("psychic force"), or proceed on

generalizations from obscure activities of the abnormal mind ("multiple personality," "subliminal self," "unconscious cerebration") which might account for some of the "mental," but not at all for the so-called "physical," phenomena of Spiritism (levitation, materialization, direct writing, etc.). Nor will it do to relegate, *a priori*, all mediumistic phenomena into the domain of willful deception, since this position is found to be based, almost invariably, on a materialistic denial of immortality. Nor can it be said that mediums always practice deception because most of them, at one time or another, have been convicted of trickery. Account, as well we may, for most Spiritistic claims of commerce with the dead, as so much conscious fraud and deception; grant that, in many cases of mediumship, the work begun for purposes of gain, by means of sleight of hand and elaborate systems of trickery, has later been continued with apparently sincere claims of supernatural endowments; granted, even, that the doubtful phenomena of suggestion, thought-transference, mental telepathy and mind-reading may account in part for the uncanny acquaintanceship with the affairs of their sitters which some mediums display in the trance state—still there remains a residuum of seance phenomena, for which none of these more or less scientific "explanations" is a solvent.

How, then, do Spiritists actually receive messages *from the dead?*

## CHAPTER SIX.

### Miasmas from the Pit.

ON the authority of a large number of scientifically trained investigators, the objective reality and genuineness of the so-called physical phenomena of Spiritism must be accepted as a fact which can not be successfully contested. After winnowing out the admittedly large percentage of manifestations produced by fraudulent means, there remains a record of tests made under conditions which definitely exclude the possibility of delusion or self-delusion.

Professor Crookes writes: "The assumption that there is a kind of mania or deception which suddenly seizes a whole roomful of intelligent persons who are otherwise in perfect health, and that they agree in the smallest details of the phenomena which they witness, seems more incredible to my mind than the facts to which they testify."

Edward Wm. Cox reports: "We proceeded like detectives. We sat under the table while the vibrations were strongest. We held the hands and feet of the medium. Each hand in the circle was held by that of the neighbor. The gas burned brightly above us. Not one finger could have moved without attracting notice of some of the many eyes that were keeping watch. All our intellect was applied to the single purpose of inventing new tests, and we were finally constrained to admit that there was not the possibility of deception."

Professor Zoellner says that to assume that he and his friends were duped by the mediums would be simply denying him ordinary judgment, and the ability to reason intelligently.

Professor Vogel, of Berlin, who had not the slightest sympathy for Spiritism, has said: "I do not hesitate to admit that it is impossible simply to deny the actuality of Spiritistic phenomena. Some of them have been studied by such reliable observers that one can not doubt the correctness of their observations."

Dr. Wm. James, professor of psychology in Harvard University, said: "In the course of time, thought transference, predictive hallucinations, crystal-gazing, yes, even apparitions, will be recognized by science. In my opinion science lies powerless in the dust in the face of these facts."

Professor James said in June, 1896: "In the trances of this medium [Mrs. Piper] I can not resist the conviction that knowledge appears which she has never gained by the ordinary waking use of her eyes and ears and wits. What the source of this knowledge may be I know not, and have not the glimmer of an explanatory suggestion to make, but from admitting the fact of such knowledge, I can see no escape."

Mr. W. F. Barrett, professor of experimental physics in the University of Ireland, sums up the result of his own prolonged investigation of the subject in these brief words: "What I am prepared to assert, from my own experience, is that neither hallucination, imposture, mal-observation, misdescription, nor any other well-recognized cause, can account for the phenomena I have witnessed."

Godfrey Raupert, K.S.G., who has written several notable works to prove that there is no communication with the departed in these phenomena, says distinctly:

"The phenomena have been under the observation of experts—in many instances men of a pronouncedly skeptical turn of mind—for a long series of years, and for all practical purposes the final verdict has been given. It is absolutely certain to-day that, under given conditions, abnormal phenomena occur, and that these phenomena are due to some kind of intelligence independent of, and apart from, the experimenter. The man who doubts this to-day is simply ignorant of the facts of the case, and unacquainted with the evidence which exists."

The younger Fichte remarked concerning the phenomena of Spiritism: "Anything that has received such universal credence can not be regarded as solely a work of deception. Nor are there any theological grounds for rejecting them as such, and there is no lack of data which has been undeniably verified as genuine."

The London Committee of Thirty-three, in 1871, declared in its report that "motion may be produced in solid bodies without material contact, by some hitherto unrecognized force operating within an undefined distance from the human organism, and beyond the range of muscular action;" and that "the force is frequently directed by intelligence."

After applying every possible test for a space of two years, a German committee of investigation composed of physicians, jurists, and professors reported: "Although every test was applied which the united intellect of the committee was able to invent or suggest, and although every possibility of deception was excluded, even the most skeptical was persuaded that the phenomena were real." The conclusions of the committee were formulated as follows: "1. Under certain bodily or spiritual conditions of one or more present persons a force is observed sufficient to cause motion of

heavy bodies without the application of muscular force, without contact or any material connection whatever between such body and any person. 2. This force is able to produce audible sounds apparently proceeding from solid bodies which are not in touch with, or in any other way acted upon, in a visible or a material manner, by the body of a present person, and that these sounds have been proved to proceed from such solid bodies, since the vibrations are plainly perceptible to the touch. 3. That this force is often directed by an intelligence."

Dr. Friedrich Zoellner, professor of astrophysics in Leipzig University, observed in broad daylight certain phenomena which, he maintained, are not to be explained as the product of trickery. In his presence writing was produced between double slates, needles became magnetized although they had not been touched, an accordion played while it lay on the table, a large salt-water shell passed through the table-top. In a statement made Dec. 6, 1877, Bellachini, a famous professor of sleight of hand, declared the phenomena observed by Zoellner to be absolutely inexplicable.

Prof. Sir William Crookes, who entered the field of investigation with every power to resist and to detect imposture, and who carried on a series of extraordinary experiments at intervals during six months with a medium, Miss Cook (some of them in his own house), makes the following classification of Spiritistic manifestations:

"The movement of heavy bodies without mechanical exertion [telekinesis]; the phenomena of percussive [rapping] and allied sounds; the raising of tables, chairs, human beings and of various substances without contact with persons or machinery [levitation]; luminous appearances; direct writing; phantom forms [ma-

terialization]; the evidence of the exercise of an exterior intelligence, indubitable incarnation of spirits."

*Lehre und Wehre* said in March, 1900: "The theory of deception is not a sufficient explanation. Even aside from the fact that such men of science as referred to above would immediately have discovered the deception and exposed the medium, it must not be forgotten that the tricks of sleight of hand are produced under conditions entirely different from those under which Spiritistic phenomena are observed! Even if certain popular magicians have declared that they are able to reproduce all Spiritistic phenomena, it should be observed that the same phenomena may be the resultant of very different causes. It might be better to say that they are able to *imitate* Spiritistic phenomena under other conditions."

Why, indeed, should one attempt to deny, *a priori*, the reality of at least some psychic phenomena? There has never been an age in which these manifestations did not occur. In his little tract on *Spiritualism*, Rev. Biederwolf reminds us of the test put by King Croesus to the oracle at Delphi. The medium on that occasion told the messengers what their master was then doing many miles away. At the shrine of Isis clairvoyants dictated prescriptions just as they do to-day. Tacitus records a spirit materialization in his narrative of Vespasian's reign. Marcellinus, another historian, refers to the arrest of two Spiritists, in the reign of Valens, who tried to discover the successor to Valens by means of a table which tipped and tilted, and by a contrivance which spelled out words just like the modern ouija-board. Virgil describes a magician:

"Her charms can call what soul she please,  
Rob other hearts of healthful ease,  
Turn rivers backward to their source,  
And make the stars forget their course."

Tertullian speaks of circles formed of joined hands which could call up the spirits of the dead, and make tables prophesy. Many centuries ago the Buddhists commenced to levitate tables and other articles of furniture. Spiritual writing in the sand, and flying tables, were a common affair among the Chinese and Hindoos. Hand-books existed in the early Christian era, which gave minute directions how to cite the spirits. Some forms of Spiritism were very common in the Middle Ages, especially among Jewish sorcerers, whose specialty was telekinesis (*e. g.*, moving tables). The most incomprehensible "stunts"—levitations, dematerializations, materializations, etc.—are performed at the present day by many Hindoo fakirs.

Paganism in all lands and in all ages has had its necromancers, sorcerers, medicine-men, shamans, who, one and all, even to the present day, claim to possess the ability to maintain commerce with the dead, and who, when under spirit control, pass into trance states which are not in any way distinguishable from the mediumistic trance. Their activity, too, in great part, rests on deception—whether conscious or not is not always easy to decide. But they, like certain Spiritistic mediums, are at times able to produce manifestations of a force which defies classification on simply natural grounds. Every record of modern exploration adds testimony in support of this general rule. When Vilhjalmur Stefansson discovered the blond Eskimo on the northern coast of Canada, he attended a seance which in every detail resembled the "tests" given in the parlors of Spiritists in New York or London. Dr. G. H. von Schubert, in his *History of the Soul* (II., p. 51), quotes examples from shamanism which demonstrated the reality of clairvoyance among the savages of northern Russia. All these pagan sorcerers, or

shamans, employ their arts in response to the requests of believers in the potency of spirit communion, in order to disclose hidden (stolen) objects, or to heal diseases, or to determine the lucky days for some undertaking, etc. They, one and all, are susceptible of trance conditions, from which they awake, like Occidental mediums, in a state of great exhaustion. Their activities are generally conducted in the artificial darkness of a hut or tent or cave (witch of Endor), and they produce uncanny noises, and throw around heavy objects, while tied with cords, just like the mediums in the Spiritistic seance.

We conclude that if ninety-nine per cent. of all Spiritistic phenomena are based on fraud or on auto-suggestion and self-deception, there is a residual one per cent. of undoubtedly genuine phenomena which can not be explained on scientific grounds, and concerning which we are simply forced to accept one of two explanations: Either these phenomena are what the Spiritualists claim them to be, caused by the spirits of the departed; or they are intrusions of the demon world upon our own, are caused by what the Bible calls evil spirits, are demoniacal in origin, are Satanic.

May we assume that the souls of the dead enter into communication with the world of the living? On the basis of Scripture teaching this must be rejected. The souls of the departed are either in Paradise or in the abode of the damned. When the rich man asked Abraham to send some one to his brethren from the dead it was denied him. Abraham is ignorant of us, and Jacob knows us not. (Isa. 63:16.) The dead have no more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun. (Eccl. 9:6.) David said regarding his dead child: "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. 12:23). "He that goes down

to the grave shall return no more to his house" (Job 7:10). "His sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not" (Job 14:21). On the basis of these Scripture passages, orthodox Christianity has everywhere maintained that there can be no communion of the dead with the living. This, as we shall see, is also the teaching of Martin Luther and of the Lutheran Confessions. However, two incidents recorded in Scripture are sometimes cited as a case of communication with the departed. There is the apparition of Samuel in the witch's cave at Endor. Spiritists are wont to cite this incident with much satisfaction. Most unjustifiably, however; for, if this was the spirit of Samuel, then he did not come in response to the medium's call, for she is struck aghast when she sees the figure. Furthermore, the sequel shows that God decidedly disapproved of the whole transaction and allowed the commission of one sin to be the punishment of others previously committed. Hence we read that shortly afterwards Saul and Israel were delivered into the hands of the Philistines and that he died as a suicide "for his transgression . . . and also *for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it*, and inquired not of the Lord" (1 Chron. 10:13, 14). The sorceress is called "mistress of an Ob," of a "familiar spirit"; hence there was some evil spirit active in the business. In all this there is little encouragement for the Spiritist. Indeed, as Rev. Biederwolf says, with greater force than elegance: "If this view is correct, it is the only case on record where God so acted, and if He did so act in this case it was for a specific divine purpose, and gives no warrant for believing that He is running a perpetual bureau for this sort of business and that any old hag can secure His services to call up the dead on any occasion or for any purpose whatsoever."

But he adds: “I am *not at all sure*, however, that this explanation is the right one.” Undoubtedly, the interpretation which best accords with the Scripture texts quoted above is that of Dr. Martin Luther, who says: “The sorceress calls forth from the grave a specter similar to the prophet Samuel both in stature and dress, by a deception and trick of the devil. Even so Paul (2 Thess. 2:10) calls the miracles which Satan performs ‘lying powers and deception.’ While Samuel was resting in the Lord, a Satanic apparition was sent to Saul as a punishment because he had despised and rejected the teachings of Samuel in his life.” (St. L. Ed., III., 793.)

As for the appearance of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration, it has been pertinently pointed out that it was not the souls, but the *persons*, of these men that appeared. The case is not in point. Elijah went to heaven in a chariot of fire, and the mystery which shrouds the disposition of the body of Moses has been rightly interpreted by John Gerhard to mean that the body was not held by its tomb, but restored to its soul in the home of the blest. So strong are the texts in Scripture which teach that there can be no commerce of the souls of the dead with the living, that the two incidents referred to must certainly be interpreted in harmony with these clear teachings.

At this point it is important to note that many, even of those who frankly confess the presence of a supernatural element in Spiritistic phenomena, have not committed themselves to the view that the spirits of the dead are the agents concerned. Many of them are cautious enough to refer to these agencies simply as “unembodied intelligences”—intelligent beings without a body.

And this permits us to advance another step in our investigation. While refusing to accept the Spiritistic theory, many close students of these phenomena assert not only their genuineness, but definitely assert that they are caused and directed *by thinking beings*, by "intelligences." They point out that there is intelligent control even in the most violent manifestations which occur at Spiritistic sittings. We quote the following from J. Godfrey Raupert (*Modern Spiritualism*), who, though not a Spiritist, speaks from personal knowledge gained at hundreds of seances: "Heavy objects and pieces of furniture, which the combined strength of several persons can not move beyond one or two inches, may be shifted or 'floated' with the greatest ease, grand pianos and ponderous dining-room sideboards may be made to change places, chairs with persons seated on them may be raised to the ceiling and lowered again to the ground. And this may take place without any kind of physical and personal contact of the sensitive [=medium] with these objects, without any wish or suggestion on his part, and not infrequently to the very great alarm and discomfiture of the persons present. But there is clear evidence of *independent intelligence* operating in connection with the phenomenon, since there is an exhibition of complete and intelligent 'control' of the force employed, *little or no damage ever being done* to the objects thus manipulated or to the living agents witnessing or eliciting it." (P. 35.)

We have already referred to "direct writing" (executed without ouija-board). Writing, sometimes occupying a whole sheet of note-paper, and containing well-formed and intelligent sentences, is frequently executed in a few seconds of time on sheets of paper placed in the center of the table, the sitters being

more than a foot distant. "The writing is sometimes done on the inside or the bottom sheet of a packet of note-paper made up of, perhaps, six or seven sheets." (Raupert, p. 45.) The occult forces "will display a sharpness and intelligence and ingenuity which often leave the student in a perfect maze of perplexity and bewilderment." "All experienced occultists agree that subconscious mind action does not cover the whole ground, and that occasionally, at least, knowledge is conveyed and information given which could not by any possible stretch of the imagination have been normally acquired or been absorbed by either the conscious or subconscious mind of the sensitive [=medium].'" (Raupert, p. 59.)

That these "intelligences" are not the spirits of the departed we know on Scriptural grounds. But there is also confirmation of our position in the very phenomena which we are now considering. Innumerable instances are on record which prove that the "intelligences" introduce themselves as celebrities which once lived on earth. However, on closer questioning they show themselves quite ignorant of those whom they personate. We meet with Carlyles and Newmans who can not mention a single book which they have written, Shakespeares who are driveling imbeciles, Bacons who are sponsors of nonsensical twaddle. And when they personate the more recently deceased, they invariably make slight errors which the deceased, were they actually speaking, would never have made. Comparing the "revelations" of the various spirits, it is also found that they make many contradictory statements regarding the condition of the departed souls. Finally, there is the low moral tone which often pervades these messages, and the terrible effect (physical and mental) of communion with the "intelligences."

These intelligences "accommodate themselves to the religious and moral views entertained by the company in which they find themselves." They will first convey the most exalted teachings about human duty and a pious life, but in a number of cases carefully investigated by Mr. Raupert, after habitually introducing itself by prayerful aspirations of the most elevating kind, the spirit "was in the end discovered to be a masquerading intelligence and, on its own confession, keenly intent on working the moral and physical ruin of its victims. The ingenuity displayed in attaining this end, the tricks and subtleties resorted to in order to escape detection and to continue 'in possession,' were in one or two instances of a kind passing all human comprehension and imagination, and the wonder is that anything like an escape from such toils is ever effected at all. In some instances this is only accomplished after the physical constitution of the victim has been completely ruined; in others the termination of the experiment is reached in the asylum or in some institution for the cure of nervous disease." (Pp. 159, 160.)

Prof. L. P. Jacks, of Oxford, president of the British Psychical Research Society in 1917, and personally a high authority on the subject, made this statement in his presidential address: "Take the question of imposture. Mediums are not the only impostors. How about the communicators [the spirits]? Are they masquerading? You can have no absolute proof that there is no imposture on the other side."

Experienced Spiritists tell us that "even where the most convincing proofs have been given, we must be cautious." "I gained the distinct impression," writes Dr. Herewald Carrington, a purely scientific investigator, "that instead of the spirits of the personages

who claimed to be present, I was dealing with *an exceedingly sly, cunning, tricky and deceitful intelligence* which threw out chance remarks, fishing guesses, and shrewd inferences, leaving the sitter to pick them up and elaborate them if he would. *If anything could make me believe in the doctrine of evil and lying spirits, it would be the sittings of Mrs. Piper.*"

Mr. Raupert says: "I had a striking experience of spirit-impersonation many years ago. A spirit, claiming to be a departed personal friend of mine and intimately acquainted with that individual's life history, was, after many months, discovered in a falsehood and then freely and boastingly admitted that he had managed to trick us so successfully by drawing the information required from our own subconscious memories. Indeed, the evidence available to-day fully demonstrates the fact that the main sources of information of these spirits are the subconscious minds of the living, although it can not be claimed that these are their only sources of information. They have probably access to knowledge by methods wholly unknown to us and quite beyond our power of imagination."

"Their consciences are as callous as if seared with a hot iron, sin has to them lost its wickedness, and they are willing dupes to unseen beings who delight to control their every faculty. Very seldom has a full-fledged Spiritualist been able to comprehend the necessity and blessedness of the religion of Jesus Christ, and to withdraw from the morbid conditions into which he has fallen. . . . For about three months I was in the power of spirits. Their blasphemy and uncleanness shocked me. But they were my constant companions. I could not get rid of them. They tempted me to suicide and murder, and to other sins." (Henry M. Hugunnin, *Spirit Possession.*)

Sir Arthur Doyle admits that we have to deal sometimes "with *absolutely cold-blooded lying on the part of wicked or mischievous intelligences*," uttering their thoughts through the mediums. We must not, therefore, he says, believe every spirit, but "try the spirits" whether they are of God. But the text goes on to say (1 John 4:1): "Because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." (One may doubt very much whether Conan Doyle would have quoted this text had he taken the trouble to look it up in the New Testament.)

Mr. Stainton-Moses, the famous medium, writes in *Spirit Identity*: "Some spirits will assent to leading questions, and, possessed apparently with a desire to please, or unconscious of the import of what they say, or without moral consciousness, will say anything. Such motiveless lying bespeaks a *deeply evil nature*. . . . Such an impostor, acting with an air of sincerity, *must be as Satan clothed in light*."

Another Spiritistic writer makes the following confession: "For seven years I held daily intercourse with what purported to be my mother's spirit. I am now firmly persuaded that it was nothing but an evil spirit, an *infernal demon*, who gained my soul's confidence and led me to the very brink of ruin." (*Facts and Fallacies of Spiritualism*, Rev. G. S. Seaman, p. 6.)

If, then, the phenomena here so frequently referred to are genuine—and of this we need not, either on evidential or on Scriptural grounds, entertain any doubts—they are undoubtedly produced *through the*

*agency of demons.* This is the doctrine of Luther and of the Lutheran Church: Wherever there is a supernatural response to devices for contact with the unseen world, it is not the dead, but the demons, that respond.

Commenting on the words of our Savior, "Behold my hands and my feet. . . . A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have," Luther says in an Easter sermon: "The Lord Himself does not deny that spirits permit themselves to be seen. He affirms it by pointing out the difference between the spirits and Himself. . . . It is well and necessary to know that the devil is at all times about us, and sometimes disguises himself, as I have seen myself. . . . We must know this, lest we regard such spirits as the souls of the departed," etc. And in a sermon on the first Sunday after Trinity: "Since the world stands, no soul has ever appeared, nor does God want any to appear, for you see in this gospel lesson that Abraham denies the rich man's petition that the dead teach the living. . . . Hence it is simply a demoniacal apparition when some spirits permit themselves to be conjured." (E. A. 13, p. 16ff.) In the Smalcald Articles (II., 2, 16) Luther explains the apparitions of the dead as "*Bueberei der boesen Geister*"—"the mocking malice of demons": "The demons have exercised their mocking malice by appearing like the spirits of the dead," etc.

The difference between the "mockery of demons," referred to by Luther, and the phenomena of Spiritism, is not as great as might be inferred. Luther refers to genuine apparitions, which he accounts for as personations of the devil. In modern Spiritism, as in shamanism the world over, there is a *voluntary* converse with demons, established through a trance state, and sometimes in normal waking condition, but always

through a *passivity of the mind* which one authority calls the "keynote of all Spiritistic experiment." A state is superinduced in which the unseen agents may invade the soul, and even employ the hand and voice. This is simply *sorcery*.

Blackstone says in his commentaries: "To deny the actual existence of witchcraft and sorcery is at once flatly to contradict the revealed Word of God in various passages of both Old and New Testament; and the system of those persons who through the agency of wicked spirits perform acts beyond the ordinary powers of man is a truth to which every nation in the world hath in its turn borne testimony, whether by well-attested examples, or prohibitory laws which at least suppose the possibility of commerce with evil spirits."

The Bible asserts the reality of sorcery. The heathen by whom Israel was surrounded had their necromancers. It must be inferred, too, from the Scriptural references to pagan sorcery, that these shamans of the Canaanites claimed to enter into communion with the dead. The principal passages which bear on this subject are: Lev. 19:31: "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards to be defiled by them; I am the Lord your God." Deut. 18:10-12: "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer; for all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord." Lev. 20:6: "And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards to go awhoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will

cut him off from among his people." Isa. 8:19: "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits and unto wizards, that peep and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?" The power of sorcerers to enter into communion with "spirits" is in these passages plainly taught. But it is not asserted, or even implied, that the "spirits" are those of the dead. Undoubtedly these "familiar spirits" of the Old Testament are the "demons" of the New. Dr. Stoeckhardt says in his *Commentary on Ephesians*: "The demons are spirits, uncorporeal beings endowed with consciousness, intellect and will, but *evil* spirits, whose entire thinking and purpose is directed to wicked ends." This is the consonant teaching of orthodox Christianity. The demons are devils. We are surrounded by spirits "who hate righteousness and hate God with a fiercer hatred than ever burnt in the hearts of the most profligate and blasphemous of our race," who "are endeavoring to accomplish our moral ruin, in this life and in the life to come." (R. W. Dale, on Eph. 6:11.) They sometimes fill the mind of the Christian with evil thoughts which he abhors and which he tries to repel, and pursue him with doubts about the existence of God and the reality of his redemption. The world, however, the ungodly, are in quite another sense subject to demoniacal influence. "The whole world lieth in the evil one" (1 John 5:19) refers to this sinister influence. The soul and its functions, man's consciousness and intellect, are open to invasions of the powers of evil. And while this holds good of every unconverted one, the control exercised by evil spirits over the soul of man is not only heightened in degree, but assumes a new and more sinister form when the will of man "meets the spirits half-way" in that

state of passivity which, all observers agree, is the necessary condition of a successful Spiritistic seance.

Dr. Quackenbos, of Columbia University, called Spiritism "a modern phase of the prohibited sin involved in attempted *communication with demons*. When the manifestations are so awfully real, so evidently the work of mysterious, unseen intelligences that those viewing them, overcome by horror, fall into hysterical convulsions, surely no objective psychic force exercised continuously or automatically by those present can be looked to in explanation. We naturally turn for a solution of the problem to the unseen world, which our Bible represents as palpitating with spirit life." Dr. Augustus H. Strong, in the fifth edition of his *Systematic Theology*, says (p. 329) that in Spiritualism "there are facts inexplicable upon merely natural principles of disease and delusion." Dr. Strong quotes, in this connection, 2 Thess. 2:9 ("the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders"), and remarks that the Scriptures here and elsewhere recognize the existence of surprising events brought about by evil spirits. After careful examination of the subject, Professor Pember says: "Since all such proceedings as these [manifestations of Spiritism] are a transgression of the limits of humanity as laid down by the Creator, it follows that all supernatural beings who sanction them and hold intercourse with the transgressor must be spirits of evil." Franz Splittgerber says, in his *Tod, Fortleben, und Auferstehung* (fourth edition, p. 209): "Not all phenomena of Spiritism are to be explained as so much deception. Many bear an undeniably supernatural character, which, however, must not be referred to the spirits of the departed, but to the obsession of demons, and as such belong to the lying wonders of the latter days

expressly foretold in Scripture (Matt. 24: 24).'' Prof. Theo. Engelder sums up the matter thus: "Spiritism has assumed the habiliments of ancient sorcery. When pianos suddenly rise in air or commence to play without contact, when books are brought through locked doors into the room, and human beings float out at one window and in at the other, there is a supernatural agency at work. These things have happened in hundreds of places and in the presence of thousands of witnesses whose word and testimony would not be impeached in any criminal court. The spirit which through the mediums conveys information based upon superhuman knowledge; foretells future events; reveals that which is hidden in the human heart and soul; imitates the handwriting of persons long dead, and confers supernatural knowledge—is the same infernal spirit which made the demoniacs clairvoyant in the days of Christ and prophesied through the woman of Endor." (Doctrinal paper read before Michigan District of the Missouri Synod in 1901.)

Of course, the wise and cultured world ridicules the very notion of a personal devil and of demons. Intellectual America runs after thousands of fake mediums, spending millions of dollars annually in order to be informed that grandpa, since he is in the spirit world, finds his hearing powerfully improved, and that our late lamented Cousin Timpkins would like to see his brother John wear the white vest with the herring-bone pattern which is hanging in the closet under the front stairs. Cultured Americans are mulcted out of their fortunes through combinations of fake mediums with promoters of mythical oil wells and gold mines. But cultured America does not believe in the devil. *Christians*, be they cultured or uncultured, believe that there is a devil, that there are evil

spirits, that there are necromancers and sorcerers, and that the Scriptural prohibitions of employing the black art are in full force to-day. Nor can the present relevancy of the texts which we have quoted be denied, when the forces which produce the manifestations of the Spiritistic seance are recognized in their true character; that is, as instances of demoniacal working through human agents.

If these are not like the phenomena which Scripture refers to when it speaks of the employment of familiar spirits, then we have no meaning to connect with these many and clear passages. Indeed, we have the example of a Spiritistic medium recorded in the Book of Acts (chap. 16: 16-18) : "And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her! And he came out the same hour." There can be no question that this young woman was a Spiritistic medium, and certainly the spirit which spoke through her was an evil spirit, a demon. The conduct of the woman, so like that of modern mediums, who advise the reading of the Bible and prayer, did not deceive the apostle.

Prof. Adolf Zoeckler wrote: "After following closely the development of thought in the field of Spiritism, I am more than ever convinced of the correctness of demoniacal explanation. The story of possession in the New Testament receives most instructive comment from the facts of Spiritism." Elsewhere

he says: "Fortune-telling spirits, of the loquacious, noisy sort reported in Acts 16:16ff., commonly speak through mediums. There are many cases of evil or unclean spirits, such as maltreated the seven sons of Sceva (Acts 19). And there are frequent cases of a multiplicity of spirits, of veritable hordes of demons, taking possession of the medium (Luke 8:30ff.)." Undoubtedly, the physical condition of mediums in the trance state is something exceedingly terrifying, and cases are on record which entirely resemble the description which we have of certain possessed persons recorded in the Gospels.

That the spirits are able to make the human tongue a vehicle of expression is evident from many passages in Holy Writ. (Matt. 8:29-31; Luke 4:34-41; Mark 1:26; Acts 19:15; Luke 8:2. Compare 8:30.) It is a notable fact that in many of these cases the spirits speaking through the obsessed knew more than their contemporaries about the person and work of Christ. Compare also these texts: "Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils" (Luke 8:2). "And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion; because many devils were entered into him" (Luke 8:30). Here is evidence that more than one demon may take possession of the human body. Mediums admit that at times several spirits control them, and hence the incoherency of the messages. Both of Mrs. Piper's hands have written different messages at the same time, while another "control" was using her voice!

Mr. Raupert quotes a correspondent who once was a member of the cult, as follows: "The spirit will impel them [the mediums] to speak things they would not, do things they should not, and confuse their brain, so that they are actually incapable of knowing, if

conscious of spirit control, whether it is their own ego, or the spirit's, which acts." Dr. von Schubert, in his *Geschichte der Seele*, records the case of a psychologically diseased woman who, after recovery, related that contrary to her intention she was forced to speak words of insanity which a foreign spirit who made his abode in her forced her to utter. She understood all that her brother said to the physician and knew how they deplored her condition, yet was unable to indicate in any way her inward better sentiments. The difference between persons so afflicted and the Spiritistic medium is simply this, that the medium holds herself a willing instrument to the influences of the spirit which controls her.

But the relation of mediumship to demoniacal possession is still closer than appears from the above. "A fully developed sensitive may, after a time, exhibit symptoms strongly indicative of what is known as possession or obsession, or, at any rate, of permanent abnormal will-control of some kind, and his condition may ultimately become a truly miserable and pitiable one; in many instances terminating in complete mental and physical collapse, and not infrequently in the asylum." (Raupert, pp. 77, 78.) As far back as 1877, Dr. L. S. Forbes Winslow wrote in *Spiritualistic Madness*: "The mediums often manifest signs of an abnormal condition of their mental faculties, and among certain of them are found unequivocal indications of a true demoniacal possession." Mr. Dal Owen, himself an ardent Spiritist, was constrained to write years ago: "There are more reasons than many imagine for the opinion entertained by some able men, Protestants as well as Catholics, that the communications in question come from the powers of darkness and that we are entering on the first steps of a career

of demoniac manifestation, the issues whereof men can not conjecture."

A more recent experimenter, Dr. Van Eeden, a Dutch physician intimately acquainted with the subject, wrote the following: "In this region lie risks of error, not merely scientific and intellectual, but also of moral error. . . . And it is this which seems, indeed, to justify the orthodox religions in condemning the evocation of spirits as immoral, as infringing on secrets hidden from man by the Eternal."

Respecting the *physical effects* of the practice of mediumship Sir Wm. Crookes writes: "After witnessing the painful state of nervous and bodily prostration in which some of these experiments have left Mr. Home—after seeing him lying in almost fainting condition on the floor, pale and speechless—I could scarcely doubt that the evolution of psychic force is accompanied by a corresponding drain on vital force." Mr. Stainton-Moses, claimed by the Spiritists all over the world as the highest authority on the subject, wrote of himself as follows: "The hand tingled and the arm throbbed and I was conscious of waves of force surging through me. When the message was done I was prostrate with exhaustion and suffered from a violent headache at the base of the brain." Dr. Von Schrenck-Nortzing a scientific experimenter of recent date, tells us that "as a rule it took the medium two days to recover from the nervous prostration resulting from these sittings." And Sir Wm. Barrett assures us repeatedly that he has observed "the steady downward course of all mediums who sit regularly." Mr. Raupert, who quotes these expressions, adds this personal testimony: "I need not say that my long and many-sided acquaintance with the subject, and the reports I am constantly receiving from shipwrecked

experimenters, confirm the literal truth of these statements." Elsewhere the same investigator writes:

"Most sensitives [mediums] suffer from brain exhaustion, and sometimes from a severe and irritating pain at the top of the spine, after a prolonged and successful experiment, and almost all professional sensitives undergo, in the course of time, a gradual but very perceptible diminution of mental and physical vigor. Many of them suffer from chronic prostration and nerve debility." This remarkably agrees with the description which we have in Mark 9:18 of the demoniac, who, at the end of each seizure, would "pine away"; that is, wither up, lie exhausted.

Dr. B. P. Randolph, author of a work, *Dealings with the Dead*, was eight years a medium. He gives his opinion of it in the following scathing words: "I enter the arena as the champion of common sense, against what in my soul I believe to be the most tremendous enemy of God, morals and religion that ever found foothold on the earth; the most seductive, hence the most dangerous, form of sensualism that ever cursed a nation, age or people. I was a medium about eight years, during which time I made three thousand speeches, and traveled over several different countries, proclaiming its new gospel. I now regret that so much excellent breath was wasted, and that my health of mind and body was well-nigh ruined. I have only begun to regain both since I totally abandoned it, and to-day had rather see the cholera in my house than be a Spiritualistic medium.

"As a trance speaker I became widely known, and now aver that during the entire eight years of my mediumship I firmly and sacredly confess that I had not the control of my own mind, as I now have, one-twentieth of the time; and before man and high heaven

I most solemnly declare that I do not now believe that during the whole eight years I was sane for thirty-six consecutive hours, in consequence of the trance and the susceptibility thereto.

"For seven years I held daily intercourse with what purported to be my mother's spirit. I am now fully persuaded that it was nothing but an evil spirit; an infernal demon who, in that guise, gained my soul's confidence and led me to the very brink of ruin. We read in Scripture of demoniac possession, as well as abnormal spiritual action. Both facts exist, provable to-day; I am positive the former does. A. J. Davis and his clique of Harmonialists say there are no evil spirits. I emphatically deny the statement. Five of my friends destroyed themselves, and I attempted it, by direct spiritual influences. Every crime in the calendar has been committed by mortal movers of viewless beings. Adultery, fornications, suicides, desertions, unjust divorces, prostitution, abortion, insanity, are not evils, I suppose. I charge all these to this scientific Spiritualism. It has also broken up families, squandered fortunes, tempted and destroyed the weak. It has banished peace from happy families, separated husbands and wives, and shattered the intellect of thousands." (*Religious Delusions*, Coombs, p. 151f.)

Professor Quackenbos says: "The effect of seance procedures, when persisted in, is physical and mental ruin. Would good angels work such results, or could our dead friends desire them? Monomania or hopeless insanity completes the purpose of Satan: he has wrecked a human mind; he has rendered useless a bright life; laid away in a napkin the talent of gold, if he has not a claim on the soul for all eternity. This is the most unvarying result of giving up life to seance work. Dr. Edmunds reports that, of a comparatively

small number of mediums of his acquaintance, ‘one had well-marked mental disturbance; another had been the inmate of a lunatic asylum; a third was seized with a mysterious form of paralysis,’ etc.; and his experience is that of all observers. Asylum superintendents bear witness that Spiritualism induces morbid psychical states, tends to develop insane delusions, and is a most fruitful maniac-making religion. Indeed, those who have seen mediums rolling on the floor, giving utterance to heart-rending screams, and disfiguring their bodies after the manner of lunatics, may well believe it. To quote the Rev. H. L. Hastings: ‘As the temporary mania of alcoholic intoxication finally ends in the settled madness that fills our insane hospitals with the hopeless wrecks of drink-ruined minds; so these evil demons, after deceiving and beguiling the unwary until they yield themselves soul and body to their control, grasp the deepest centers of mental, nervous and vital action, disturb the physical forces, disorder the nervous system, subvert the will, and unbalance the judgment, until the temporary frenzy of spirit control settles into the permanent madness of demoniacal possession, which wrecks the mental and moral constitution, and leaves the madhouse or the suicide’s grave to conceal the finished work of evil spirits from the gaze of the outside world.’” (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1900, p. 149.)

Dr. Forbes Winslow, Oxford lecturer on mental diseases, of Charing Cross Hospital, said the prevalence of madness owing to Spiritualism was on the increase. The late Reader Harris, K.C., wrote: “The most remarkable case of mediumship I have met with was that of a lady who commenced with a little seemingly innocent table-turning at a children’s party, and finished up by death in a madhouse.” (*Fundamentals*, X., p. 123.) “Ten thousand people,” wrote Dr. Forbes

Winslow, as far back as 1877, "are at the present time confined in lunatic asylums on account of having tampered with the supernatural."

The more closely we inspect this awful subject, the more sinister does it appear, the more clearly do these unseen "intelligences" stand revealed as miasmas from the pit. The following well-known passage from Spiritualistic literature is very significant: "They come, *the door once open*, in crowds, in riotous invasion. They run, they leap, they fly, they gesticulate, they sing, they whoop, and they curse . . . Mind, body, soul, memory and imagination—nay, the very heart—are polluted by the ghostly *canaille*."

On the 8th of December, 1861, Miss Lizzie Doten, one of the most popular spirit mediums in America, at a meeting in Lyceum Hall, Boston, offered the following Spiritualistic prayer to Satan: "O Lucifer, thou Son of the Morning, who fell from the high estate, and whom mortals are prone to call the embodiment of evil, we lift our voices unto thee. We know thou canst not harm us unless by the will of the Almighty, of whom thou art a part and portion, and in whose economy thou playest a part, and we can not presume to sit in judgment over Deity. From the depths of thine infamy stream forth divine truths. Why should we turn from thee? Does not the same inspiration rule us all? Is one in God's sight better than another?" Prof. W. Chaney, in San Jose, Calif., prayed: "O Devil, Prince of the Christian's Hell, hear my prayer." (Coombs, *Religious Delusions*, p. 132f.)

Spiritism, counter to the divinely established order, ventures into a territory from which God has by rigid commands excluded the searching spirit of man. In a manner specifically forbidden by God, and through prohibited means, this system endeavors to break down

the limits of the material and the unseen world. It would constrain the evil spirits to give information regarding the beyond, and in other ways serve the devotees of the system. Let us note that there is not a single text in Scripture which condemns sorceries as fraud, deception or imagination. Scripture takes for granted that sorcery is a fact, and, where pagan systems of religion rule, a very common fact. Undoubtedly it is due to the general apostasy of the modern church from the fundamentals of Christianity that voluntary Satanic possession—the fully developed mediumistic trance, when genuine, is simply that—has become so common in our days.

## CHAPTER SEVEN.

### Some Questions Answered.

#### 1. IS NOT THE TRIVIALITY OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AN ARGUMENT AGAINST THEIR DIABOLICAL ORIGIN?

Answer, No. Judging offhand, it might seem strange that the evil spirits can do nothing better than treat their audience to small talk such as would prove a living person an intolerable bore, if not an imbecile. But is not this a proof that God holds in check the powers which evil spirits might otherwise exert? Is it not a notable fact that not one single new invention, not one discovery, stands to the credit of the seance? We are reminded of Luther's remark that the devil, who would so delight in destroying human lives, is under such control that he can only frighten men with uncanny racket. In our days he raps tables, strums a guitar, rips up curtains and pieces of cloth, and pushes pianos around—rather degrading occupations for spirits that once rebelled against God! The trivialities communicated are furthermore just what we should expect from a spirit who always disappoints the ungodly who serve him in a life of sin, promising them riches, pleasure and fame, and very often giving them only poverty, pain, disgrace, and sometimes a suicide's grave.

#### 2. DOES NOT THE FREQUENT DETECTION OF MEDIUMS IN INTENTIONAL DECEPTION ARGUE AGAINST THE CORRECTNESS OF OUR VIEW?

One might put the question thus: If the evil spirits are in control, then what is the necessity of employing fraud and deception? The charge of fraudulent practises is generally admitted by Spiritists. The presiding officer of the convention held by the Spiritists in 1897, in Washington, D. C., painted a vigorous picture of various frauds practised by mediums, which frauds, he said, were so loathsome that he could not name them in words. However, on due thought it will appear that the element of fraud is just what one should expect in mediumistic work. We leave out of consideration, of course, such plain humbugs as the great Rudinor, Madame Mizpah with the Seven Veils, and their company. We are thinking of the Fox sisters, and of Holmes and Palladino. To begin with, the necromancers of ancient days, as well as the shamans of savage tribes and fakirs of India, have ever been guilty of deception, even when the powers were genuine. The medicine-men of the South Sea Islands who were converted to Christianity have confessed that the trance state in which they exercised power of clairvoyance was at times mere pretense, but at the same time admitted that they frequently were actually unconscious and acting under some hidden impulse. (G. H. von Schubert, *Geschichte der Seele*, p. 52.) In the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* of May 21, 1904, a strange bit of reminiscence was offered by a Presbyterian minister attending a convention, concerning the devil and Spiritism. He gave it as it had been told to him by a trustworthy man of science, a profound student of half a century or more ago, who became one of the founders of the Smithsonian Institute. To this scientist an Indian in the northwest country made confession, after he became a Presbyterian, of the methods he had used in invoking the spirits. He had been a medium, and

when he was within the cabinet most unearthly sounds of drum-beating, cries of wild animals and a multitudinous din filled the air. "This Indian, in his confession, declared that he had not used any occult mechanism or any sleight-of-hand performance to make the sounds within the cabinet, but as soon as he got inside he had begun with all his might to 'pray to the devil.' This was the poor Indian's only method. He firmly believed that it was the devil who produced the sounds, and while the scientist did not vouch for the absolute truth of this, nor could he say how much of a part so-called subconsciousness played in the matter, he was convinced that the Indian at least thought he was telling the truth." Yet these Indian medicine-men have been detected numberless times in clumsy deception.

In the second place, the student of Spiritistic records can not fail to observe that a "developed" medium possesses an intense desire to get into communication with the spirits, and literally trembles with eagerness to comprehend and transmit their messages. Besides, she has an interest in convincing the sitters that she has spirit information for them. What is more natural than that the mediums will endeavor to help out with a trick the impressiveness of the phenomena, when the spirit control is weak, or even cause rappings, automatic writing, and other phenomena, by conscious deception, when the conditions are unfavorable and the spirits do not respond? Finally, proceeding on the belief that the communicators are demons, the lying practises of mediums are exactly what one would expect from such agencies. While the physical phenomena have in many cases been proven undoubtedly genuine, the whole system is a mass of artful lies, with impersonations of the dead,

often fictitious information and false religious teaching. The fact that many phenomena can not be performed except in the dark room is, of course, a frequent occasion of fraud, yet we can well understand that even genuine manifestations would require darkness as a necessary condition. The sorcerers and medicine-men of all ages have sought the darkness of a hut or cave for their performances. If we knew the full truth of those Scriptural expressions which refer to Satan as the prince of *darkness*, we should very probably better understand why the exclusion of the light of day is necessary for some of these practises.

### 3. DOES NOT, AFTER ALL, TELEPATHY ENTER INTO THE PHENOMENA DESCRIBED?

This is a complex subject. Let us first clear up some of the concepts involved. *Telepathy* is the term employed to describe that action of the mind by which it receives, without any known medium of communication, often unconsciously, ideas from another mind. It must be noted that there are many students of psychology who deny that there is such a thing as "telepathy." But, granting that there is, how is our problem affected thereby? Telepathy assumes that there is in every person a conscious mind and an unconscious mind; to the latter—of the existence of which we are hardly aware—ideas are said to be communicated from the mind of another person. This, according to the theory, is the telepathic process. Now, to what extent is it conceivable that the information which mediums convey has been received by them through "telepathy"? Let us admit that in this manner—always supposing that there is such a thing as "telepathy"—the entranced medium might gain knowledge of some facts *known to some person present*.

But the theory breaks down when mediums are able to convey messages in which there is a reference to facts or events *unknown to any person present*, and which must be verified by research or correspondence. I know that such communications—their reality has been established beyond question—are explained by some psychologists by supposing that the subconscious (subliminal) mind of one person may convey information to a second person *through the subconscious mind of a third*. For instance, if A (now deceased) had knowledge of a hidden object, he may have conveyed this knowledge by telepathy to B, who remains unconscious of this knowledge, but passes on this knowledge to C, the medium in her trance state. However, this presumes a telepathy which is almost omniscient, and Spiritists rightly contend that a man who believes in such an extension of the telepathic theory ought not to find it difficult to believe in spirits!

An example is quoted by Dr. Carpenter as a probable case of ideas latent in the mind of the sitter having found expression through the medium. It is this: Rev. Mr. Dibdin relates in the *Quarterly Review* the experience of a gentleman who was experimenting with the table. The spirit claimed to be that of the poet Young. It was asked to give some evidence of its identity. This line was spelled out:

“Man was not made to question, but adore.”

Asked if the line was in *Night Thoughts*, the reply was, “No.” Asked, “Where then?” the answer was, “Job.” The gentleman could not recall the fact that he had ever read that poem, but when he referred to his own copy of Young, he saw that he had read it, and had noted that line. (*Lutheran Quarterly*, 1894, p. 19.)

Now, if the messages announced by mediums were all of such a character, the telepathic hypothesis might be accepted as an explanation. But since information is often conveyed which could not possibly be within reach of the mind of the medium or of the sitters, and the correctness of which is only ascertained on subsequent inquiry, the theory breaks down. Furthermore, if there is only a mysterious mental force active in these trance states, then how shall we explain their degrading physical and moral effects, how explain the antichristian teachings which are *invariably* conveyed, and how account for the physical phenomena described (direct writing, rappings, levitations, etc.), the occurrence of which is now generally admitted?

4. IS THE OUIJA-BOARD ALWAYS AN AGENCY OF COMMUNICATION WITH SPIRITS?

No. Suggestion and auto-suggestion will probably explain the intelligence which the board so frequently displays. Yet it is certain that by the use of this contrivance the avenues are opened to influences which may grow on the operator before their nature is recognized. Raupert says: "The door which by these various practises is apt to be easily and readily opened, is not so easily shut." It is the state of passiveness necessary in the operation of the board that facilitates the invasion of unseen influences, and prepares the way for "a form of spirit control which is apt to be most subtle and complex in its character, and of the operation of which he may himself remain unconscious for a considerable period of time." The story is told by a noted British lawyer that his daughters, aged eleven and fourteen years, took up the ouija-board out of amusement in the evening after lessons. They did not regard it seriously, but rather as a game. For a time nothing of importance was received, but all of a sud-

den, early in March, 1918, when these children were sitting, messages began to "come through" that were "serious, sensible, reliable, connected, and vividly real." They were short, and mostly from relatives who had "passed over." These girls, and also their father, have ever since been devoted Spiritists.

The case is cited of a minister who took up automatic writing. At first the communications were pure, and expressed in beautiful language. After a time they became mixed with obscene language. Then he heard voices, and things so preyed on his mind that he became insane, and died in three months, raving mad.

But Sir Conan Doyle speaks of automatic writing as "perhaps the most satisfactory means of communication." He must know something of the dangers attending it, because he tells his readers, in a vague sort of way, that this kind of thing "can be overdone." The well-established fact, of course, is that this apparently harmless form of communication is the *most dangerous one of all*. "For," says one observer, "while this writing in its various forms can be readily induced and progressively developed, it can not be so easily shaken off. In most instances the experimenter ultimately becomes the victim of the power which he called in operation, that power, by the incessant and maddening prompting itself, disclosing itself as anything but a kindly relative or friend."

There is no form of human research that so readily becomes a morbid craving which consumes its victims both in body and soul. J. G. Raupert says in *Modern Spiritism*: "It seems as though each single new experiment created but an appetite for a further and better one, and went but to stimulate that well-known 'craving for phenomena' which can never be stilled. There are thousands of persons in England at this present

time who pass from seance to seance and from medium to medium, incessantly on the hunt after fresh evidence, and ceaselessly seeking for new and more exciting ‘developments.’ ”

Here, as everywhere, the rule holds that “beginnings must be resisted.” The ouija-board is a recognized contrivance for spirit communication. Even were its “communications” in every case due to “subconscious action” of the manipulator, its association with Spiritism would still be sufficient reason for Christians to keep, literally, “hands off,” and to banish it from their homes. “Touch not, handle not!”

#### 5. WHY DO THE “INTELLIGENCES” INTRODUCE THEMSELVES AS SOULS OF THE DEPARTED?

The question is an easy one to answer. If the demons would introduce themselves *as such*, and at once reveal their hatefulness and depravity in order to certify their true character, there would be an end of seances, would there not? But if they can not afford to declare their identity, whom can they personate in the spirit world except angels and the souls of the dead?

#### 6. WHAT IS MEANT BY THE STATE OF PASSIVITY WHICH HAS BEEN CALLED THE “KEY-NOTE OF ALL SPIRITISTIC PHENOMENA”?

The passivity referred to is both mental and moral, and may be physical. Passivity means a state of receptiveness, of being open to influences, by keeping the mind unemployed, either absolutely, as in the hypnotic trance, or relatively, as when the mind is centered on one object to the exclusion of all others. Let us assume that a person is eager for spirit communications (this is the moral passivity, in which conscience no longer warns against the sin of communication with “the dead”); add to this a state of mental

abstraction, in which the sitter (and also, of course, the medium) is occupied with no other thought than this: When will my friend begin to speak? What will be his message?—and we have a condition favorable for the action of the unseen powers. If, in addition, there is a state of physical passivity (*i. e.*, the trance state), the possibilities are immeasurably heightened. What is the *trance*? The mediumistic trance is “a state of insensibility or unconsciousness of whose nature we know little or nothing.” (Hyslop.) It is similar in most respects to the hypnotic trance, from which it generally differs in that it is produced by the person in question (auto-hypnosis), or comes upon it without known causation. Now, in this trance state the brain is left temporarily uncontrolled, and in such a condition the “intelligences” (spirits) “invade the soul and occupy it with varying degrees of control.” When the control is very complete, occultists speak of “developed,” “highly developed,” mediums. What happens then is readily understood if the actions of an ordinarily “hypnotized” person are analyzed. In this state the subject is under the influence of the hypnotizer’s will; his individuality is, so to say, merged with the hypnotizer’s; he knows the unspoken thoughts of the operator, and acts in accordance with them. At the same time there may be a supranormal increase of powers (clairvoyance). And this state, which locks the doors of sense, may open an avenue for the influence of unseen forces. Dr. G. Barth (*Lebensmagnetismus*, 1852) said that in cases which came under his personal observation the trance state opened a way to influences from the spirit world, the awful and destructive results of which he had to correct in the performance of his duties as a physician. Dr. G. H. von Schubert likewise warns against experimenting

with hypnotism, since in the hypnotic sleep "he who desires contact with the world of demons has the ability to practise such communications."

The eagerness of evil spirits to enter into communication with men should be remembered in this connection. This eagerness is, to my mind, the most terrible characteristic of the reports of successful seances. The case, referred to in another chapter, of a young man who merely *pretended* to communicate with the spirits, and who suddenly became aware of another personality becoming associated with his own, and speaking through his voice, is highly significant.

Add to such tampering with the normal mind a depraved moral character, and a state of mind is easily developed which creates a bond of affinity with the evil intelligences, who, by reason of this affinity, gain a closer access to the soul.

Mr. Raupert is unquestionably right when he says: "The grave peril to which the rash and unwary expose themselves in entering on these experiments must be apparent to the most superficial thinker. The door of the mind once thrown open, either by the practise of mediumship or by sin and passion, access to the personality by the unseen spirit-agent becomes a comparatively easy matter; and the degree in which this access is effected depends largely on the physical health and the general mental and moral condition of the victim. . . . The fact of this domination is also confirmed by the circumstance that the victims of these preternatural 'controls' frequently come to their senses when the climax of this demoniac invasion has been reached, and the moral downfall has been accomplished. They then often awaken from what they themselves describe as a trance-like state, and can not recognize themselves in the situation in which their fall has placed them.

They are apt to assert emphatically that it was not their true self, but some hidden and unsuspected power in them, which somehow gained the mastery, and which unbalanced and paralyzed the true self."

#### 7. WHY DO MEN OF HIGH SCIENTIFIC STANDING FALL PREY TO THE SEDUCTION OF THIS CULT?

When the list of those who are prominent in the movement is carefully scanned it will appear that they, one and all, before their conversion to Spiritism, had been either skeptics or declared infidels. Alfred R. Wallace, as a young man, rejoiced in the works of Voltaire, Strauss and Karl Vogt, and himself says that he "became a thorough and confirmed materialist." J. Arthur Hill, one of the British leaders, declares that he was a Huxleyan agnostic before he took up Spiritism. Arthur Conan Doyle confesses that he disbelieved in "the whole idea of immortality." Ella Wheeler Wilcox was an infidel long before she became a Spiritist. Those who reject the true religion of Christ fall a prey to the sinister forces that tilt tables and write between slates. Luther hit the nail on the head when, commenting on Luke 16:31, he remarks: "Whoever will not hear Moses and the prophets, may hear the devil pretending to speak through the dead." (XIII., p. 2146.)

## CHAPTER EIGHT.

### Doctrines of Demons.

**S**PIRITISM is a religion. It professes to instruct man in his relations to the Invisible and Eternal. It is recognized as a religious sect in our Government statistics.

Spiritists have meeting-places in which some sort of religious service is conducted. Some mediums display signs bearing the announcement: "Church of Christ, Spiritualist," or "Theonomistic Church," or "Spiritualistic Chapel." Elsewhere we find that lodge-halls are rented for certain hours on Sunday by the cult, and sometimes meetings are conducted regularly at the home of some member. In Great Britain, says J. Arthur Hill, there are at least 350 societies holding Sunday services, and about forty of these own their places of worship.

At Spiritistic meetings for worship, there is generally a demonstration of mediumistic powers, generally by clairvoyance and clairaudience, some hymns are sung, prayers spoken, and generally a lecture is delivered on some teaching of the cult.

What are the religious tenets of Spiritism?

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's creed may be summarized thus:

I believe in the existence of angels; I believe in a painless death and an immediate entrance into life; I believe that the wicked will not be severed from

God forever, but will enter, not a permanent hell, but a temporary purgatory, where they will be purged from their sin; I believe that we may look for a new revelation through some new Jesus, who shall break the veil that still hides the future life from the present; I believe that what we hitherto were obliged to take on faith we may now touch and handle and see; I believe that the Christian faith will be much modified and changed by this new and scientifically demonstrated revelation.

In a pamphlet entitled *The Seven Principles of Spiritualism*, by the secretary of the British Spiritualists' National Union (Mr. Hanson G. Hey), the doctrinal position of the cult is described as follows:

"Spiritualism teaches us that we are spirits now, as much as ever we shall be, though temporarily inhabiting these tenements of clay, for purposes of experience.

"We have no creed, no dogmas, but we have a set of principles. . . . They are seven in number, and we assert that whoever embraces these principles, assimilates them, and expresses them in his life, needs no other compass to steer his bark o'er the troubled waters of religious, political, social or industrial life.

"They are as follows: 1. The fatherhood of God. 2. The brotherhood of man. 3. Continuous existence. 4. Communion of spirits and ministry of angels. 5. Personal responsibility. 6. Compensation and retribution hereafter for good or ill done on earth. 7. A path of endless progression.

"We assert that no man, however good, deserves absolute bliss for the good he can do in the short space of this earthly career; and no man, however bad, deserves the other extreme. For, after all, man is but finite; therefore, anything he may do here is finite, be it

good or ill." (Quoted by J. A. Hill, in *Spiritualism*, p. 180f.)

Spiritists distinctly assert the supremacy of reason in all religious matters. There is no inspired Bible, inerrant, and complete in its religious contents; Spiritualism has demonstrated *to the senses* the reality of the life beyond. It is a science. Its teachings are as well established as any other facts arrived at by induction. Such is the position of Spiritualism, both in America and abroad.

In his *A Vindication of Spiritualism*, Mr. Herman E. Hoch writes: "Were I not so thoroughly convinced that I am on the *right track*, and that Spiritualism is the only sure foundation for a *true* philosophy and a *pure* religion, I would give heed to your well-meant admonition and do as you advise. If you knew Spiritualism as I understand it, you would see that it is the only system of religion and philosophy that is in harmony with the whole order of nature; it is the only religion that has a scientific basis; it is the only system of belief that depends on facts."

He inveighs against the ministers of the church: "It is only the bias-minded, creed-blinded ministers of the orthodox pulpits, who know nothing of the philosophy and the phenomena of Spiritualism, and who have never read a book on psychology or occult science, who have the asinine foolishness in these days of advanced thought to denounce and belittle the stupendous phenomena of spirit return. I have no patience with those opinionated orthodox preachers who keep hammering away at the *old, mossback, nightmare dogma of vicarious atonement*. I will not accept anything simply on faith. I must know before I can believe." Quoting a sentence from Ingersoll, he ex-

claims: "Banish me from Eden when you will, but let me eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge!"

To Mr. Hoch historic, orthodox Christianity, which has been the illuminator and civilizer of the nations of the earth, and the renovating power, the life, comfort, joy and hope of millions of souls for nineteen centuries, is nothing but a "gross, cruel, nightmare dogma," and he substitutes for it the demon-worship called Spiritualism, as "the only [and pure] religion."

Mr. Harrison D. Barrett, president of the (American) National Spiritualist Association, wrote in 1902: "Recognizing truth alone as their leader, the followers of Spiritualism steadfastly refused to accept any religious postulates on faith, and at the very outset rejected all creeds and dogmatic assumptions of theology as stumbling-blocks in their pathway. They were in search of that which was true, demonstrable by the evidence of fact. Reason was accepted as a helper in their work, and every proposition was brought to its bar, carefully analyzed and fitted into its proper niche in the economy of thought, ere any conclusion was announced. By this method of procedure certain well-defined principles were presented to man's consciousness that have proved themselves over and over again to be axiomatic facts. These truths need no creed to explain them, nor was man required to accept them on faith, nor to take them by the rushlight of hope. His mind was illumined by the electric lamp of knowledge, and his understanding was the judge of the evidence presented to him. He was led step by step through phenomena, science and philosophy, up to the realm of religion, where he found the eternal verities upon which he could build the temple of the soul in the calm assurance that it would stand forever as the

one place in which all of the children of men could find spiritual knowledge."

J. Arthur Hill writes: "Christ brought life and immortality to light by rising from the dead and appearing to, and communicating with, His followers. These first believers were honest men who had not been sophisticated to the extent of disbelieving the unusual; men who trusted their senses and believed their report as we do in ordinary affairs. So with the early Spiritualists. They found facts which indicated survival. They brought life and immortality to light once more; not by one unique instance, but by multitudes of instances, though mostly not of the same order as that great early one. The modern phenomena are, for the most part, in a lower key than those of the Gospel records; but they amply confirm and justify the belief which was based on the events there described. These phenomena Spiritualists make the basis of their philosophy and religion, as the early Christians did with their experiences." (*Spiritualism*, p. 28.)

The late rise of Spiritism as a religious system is accounted for on the basis of evolutionary development: "It may seem strange that we have had to wait nearly nineteen hundred years for a recurrence of this kind of fact; or, rather, for adequate recognition of it—for it is probable that these things have always been happening more or less without receiving systematic attention. But there is no doubt a reason for it. Each age has its own function in the scheme of evolution, and it can not attend to everything. It is only in the fullness of time that each new advance is made." (Hill, *ibid.*, p. 29.)

While denying the inspiration and authority of the Bible, Spiritists, especially within the last decade, assert that not only are mediumistic phenomena recorded

in both Testaments, but that also the teachings of the Bible bear a Spiritistic interpretation. Spiritistic mediums have received "revelations" from St. Paul, the apostle's spirit interpreting his epistles in a psychic sense chapter for chapter and verse for verse. St. Peter has supplied an interpretation of the Gospel according to Mark, and St. John an exposition of the Book of Revelation. Everywhere the teachings of Spiritism are imported into the sacred text. The "spiritual gifts" (1 Cor. 12) are explained as a reference to mediums. Verse 4: "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit;" there are different kinds of mediumship produced by the same spiritual law; clairvoyants and physical phenomena are referred to in verse 10: "The working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues." 1 Cor. 14:26 is made to refer to the revelations and interpretations obtained in the seance. The appearances of Christ after his resurrection referred to in the Gospels are accepted as instances of materialization. The liberation of the apostles from prison (Acts 5 and 16) is reported as dematerializations (enabling bodies to penetrate solid substances). Clairvoyances and clairaudiences are disclosed in the appearance of Philip to the eunuch, the vision of Ananias at Damascus, and in similar narratives. The walking of Christ on the Sea of Galilee is an example of levitation.

When you tell a Spiritist that the Bible strictly forbids any efforts to enter into communication with the departed, and quote to him such passages as Lev. 19:31, "Turn ye not unto them that have familiar spirits," he will reply: "Yes, but that prohibition was intended *only for the Jews!* In the same nineteenth chapter of Leviticus God gives instructions for offering a ram as a sacrifice in a certain kind of sin,

and forbids the Jews to use clothing consisting of two kinds of stuff mingled together. Do you wish to assert that these prohibitions and laws are binding on us to-day? And if not, how can it be maintained that verse 31 is binding?" (J. Arthur Hill.) This at first sight looks like a pretty successful evasion. But let us look into Deuteronomy, chapter 18, where the same prohibition is repeated: "There shall not be found among you a consulter with familiar spirits." This chapter distinctly says that Spiritistic practises were not only wrong for the Jews, but that precisely on account of their Spiritistic abominations God would drive out the *Canaanites* before the children of Israel (v. 12). Hence, even when found among the heathen, Spiritistic practises were an abomination unto the Lord, and the prohibition of such "consulting of spirits" was by no means only part of the ceremonial law. Attempts to communicate with the spirits is here clearly stigmatized as a heathen practise. Other considerations, of course, point to the same conclusion, but Deut. 18:12-14 is absolute proof that efforts to enter into communication with the spirits of the departed are an offense against Biblical morality, and are an abomination in the sight of God.

What have Spiritists to say about the person of Jesus Christ and His mission? On the whole, they deny His deity, and their prevailing doctrine is that He was nothing more than a powerful medium. "I do not find," says Gerald Massey, a leading Spiritist, "that Christ claimed for Himself more than he held out as possible for others. When He identified Himself with the Father, it was in the oneness of mediumship—He was the great Medium or Mediator." "The miraculous conception of Christ," says another, "is merely a fabulous tale," and still another assigns to

Him a dual nature, not divine and human, but male and female. It is advanced with special emphasis by the sect of T. L. Harris, and some English Spiritists announced the speedy epiphany of a female Messiah, "the second Eve and the Mother of all living." "The idea of a good God," wrote Mr. Stainton-Moses, "sacrificing His sinless Son as a propitiation for man is repudiated as monstrous." (*Higher Aspects of Spiritualism*, p. 104.) In place of this it is said that man can have no savior outside of himself.

Mr. Barrett propounds the seven religious teachings of Spiritualism, which are in essence the same as those announced by Mr. Hey, quoted in the beginning of this chapter. Concerning his seventh principle (identical with Hey's fifth—"Personal Responsibility") he says:

"Spiritualism's seventh principle is self-salvation. By it man is made his own savior, and he has no chance whatever to act the coward by casting the responsibility for his evil-doing on another. He must meet the consequences for good or evil of his every act or thought. He can not gain a seat in heaven through the merits of another. As he sows, so must he reap, and if he would escape a future filled with keen suffering and bitter regret, he must save himself from all forms of evil while yet in mortal form. Spiritualism teaches him to fill his soul with love for humanity, even as the flower stores its heart with sunshine that it may burst forth in rich fragrance for the good of others. An enlightened conscience, quickened by the unseen soul-self, is ever with him to prompt him aright, if he will but listen to its low, sweet voice. He must do right for right's sake; be good for the sake of goodness, just for the sake of justice; honest, not from any dictates of policy, but

from a keen sense of honor. Then will his salvation be assured through his own efforts."

There can be no more outright denial of salvation through the merits of our divine Redeemer Jesus Christ.

Another Spiritist exclaims: "What a wicked and soul-destroying delusion has been the clerical farce of salvation by a vicarious atonement!" And the familiar of "M. A. Oxon" declared: "Sin is remediable by repentance and atonement and reparation personally wrought out in pain and shame, not by coward cries for mercy, and by feigned assent to statements which ought to create a shudder."

Sir Conan Doyle tells us that we must "concentrate more upon Christ's life and much less upon His death," etc. In his book he develops this thought more fully, and tells us that since there never was a Fall there could be no need of atonement and redemption, and that "one can see no justice in vicarious sacrifice, nor in the God who could be placated by such means." Now, what is this but "a making void of the cross of Christ," as St. Paul puts it, and a relapsing into paganism? For if any fact is clear from history it is the fact that the doctrine of the atoning and redeeming death of the Son of God is a fundamental primitive truth of Christianity. Strangely enough, however contradictory the "communications" are on all other religious topics, in this they all agree: There is no salvation by the blood of Christ. Raupert has this: "It is certainly a remarkable fact that on this point the higher intelligences are strangely unanimous and emphatic in their statements, and all Spiritualists are agreed." (*Op. cit.*, p. 220.) Remarkable indeed! It is to me the strongest proof that the spirits which cause the Spiritistic phenomena are of Satan's crew. Where

agreement is on one point only—namely, that the historic Christian doctrine respecting the nature and character of Redemption is an imposition, the “fabric of an artificial scholastic philosophy”—the source of such a system is surely demoniacal.

Quackenbos writes: “Spiritism not only looks to disembodied spirits for advice and guidance, but it denies that Jesus died for our sins or made any atonement therefor. It regards Christ as a healing medium, flouts His divinity, and loses sight of Him in a crowd of benevolent demons, explaining His miracles as ‘the results of a natural law of which His mediumistic power enabled Him to avail Himself.’ . . . Like Theosophy, it forces a feminine principle into the God-head; and some of its professors have announced the coming of a female Messiah, a second Eve, the divine mother of all the living. To a select few, behind locked doors at an ‘inner circle of the Mystery of the Divine Presence,’ Christ is asserted to have revealed Himself with a female figure standing beside Him, a celestial feminine personality. God is made dual, He and She, as much woman as man, Mother as well as Father—‘an hermaphrodite spirit cleft in twain and manifested in two outward forms.’ The worship of the Babylonian Istar, the Lady Queen of Heaven, corresponding to the Egyptian Isis, has been revived in the very shadow of our churches.” (Quoted in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1900, p. 143.)

It is true that we find the most divergent and even contradictory views—spirit teachings—concerning the person of Jesus Christ. He is God and He is not God. He is mystically the second person of the blessed Trinity. He is God in the sense that we are all emanations of the divine nature. And He is no more divine

than was Mahomet, and He never claimed to be God. But, worst of all, the most blasphemous things that could possibly be conceived have been written about Him, under alleged spirit guidance.

The Spiritist stands forth as the champion of the spirituality of man. Man, he repeatedly proclaims, is a spirit. Man, we are told, hardly counts till he has become disincarnate. The spirit world is the only world that matters. But, while making much of man's "spiritual" self, he denies the personality, and some deny the very existence, of God. One of them does not hesitate to express himself in the *Westminster Review* as follows: "We have ceased to embody the conception of the state in a person, and it is time that we should cease similarly to embody the conception of the universe." This author has a universe without an Author or Ruler. Further on he says: "In like manner loyalty to a divine person will some day become extinct as a manifestation of the feeling which ought to sway us in our relations to that whole, whereof we form so significant a part, but its place will be taken by a conscious and cheerful accordance with the laws which make for the well-being of the universe." Of course, this is simple atheism.

The atheistic position is often discoverable under phrases which have a pantheistic flavor. As in the following opinion, written automatically by "one on the other side," and quoted with approval by a Spiritist writing in the *Chicago Record-Herald*, Jan. 3, 1902: "My friend, if you would but see and understand what is the purpose of life, you would know how fatal it would be to allow any and every cry for direction and guidance and help to be unanswered. The object of life is to evoke, to develop the God within."

"Brahma, Buddha, Jupiter and Jehovah must all vanish before the glories of our new religion," is the boast of H. Tuttle in his *Arcana*.

The spirits are made objects of worship in the Sunday (devotional) meetings of Spiritists. J. Arthur Hill writes: "Next came a prayer by a wounded soldier who assisted Mr. Tyrell on the platform: 'Out of the vault of matter and unripened experience, we approach Thee, who art the great controlling and dominating power in the universe. To-night we are desirous for one short hour of approaching and holding communion with those who, having passed through that momentary eclipse called death, by Thy immutable laws are permitted to return through the minds of mediums, and manifest that presence to us. We thank you that in your providential capacity you have so permitted us this privilege, but we are glad that this may be something more than the monopoly of a few—that this can become the common experience of each one of us. We thank you, dear spirit friends, for continually coming to aid and abet us. We ask you further to extend that love to us to-night, that we may impart that glorious knowledge which it has been our comfort to receive. We are desirous of impressing upon the minds of all the knowledge that life after death is a certainty. We do this as a means to an end that they will, as a result of that experience, recognize that the phenomena are the finger-post and indication to a higher state of being. We desire, then, individually and co-operatively to endeavor to materialize these ideals which are associated with their lives into this very real world that we live in to-day. We are desirous of doing so much, yet circumstances permit so little. We are desirous of removing poverty, superstition, war, vice and crime, and all those things which menace

humanity in their path towards progress. That is why spirits come to us. That is their highest desire and ideal, when, freed from the bondage of time and sense, freed from the struggle for bread and butter and economic circumstances, they seek to come back and co-operate with us to make this world we live in a much better one. We also ask you to go amongst those who are in any way in trouble. May you all, I implore you, extend that sympathy, that passivity, towards our brother, that you will afford those conditions that will demand the best from him, that by his results we shall have the highest form of manifestation known.” (J. A. Hill, *Spiritualism*, p. 185f.) This is certainly offering worship to demons. Denying the invisible God, Spiritists have turned to the Evil One and his host, and are, in essence, a sect of Devil-worshippers.

The system of morality in vogue among adherents of the cult is on a par with its religion. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” There is, of course, much highly moral verbiage in the communications of the spirits. Many platitudes about being good and being kind and being cheerful and being hopeful and being patient, and so forth, et cetera, *ad nauseam* and *ad infinitum*. Nor do we charge Spiritists as a class with outward gross immorality. Yet the teachings emanating from the cult are in more than one respect subversive of Christian morals.

A very low valuation is placed on the marriage obligation.

Prof. T. H. Hudson, one of the most careful writers, says: “I do not charge Spiritualists as a class with being advocates of the doctrines of free love. On the contrary, I am aware that, as a class, they hold the marriage relation in sacred regard. I can not

forget, however, that but a few years ago some of their leading advocates and mediums proclaimed the doctrine of free love in all its hideous deformity from every platform in the land. The moral virus took effect here and there all over the country, and it is doing its deadly work in secret in many an otherwise happy home. And I charge a large and constantly growing class of professional mediums with being the leading propagandists of the doctrine of free love. They infest every community in the land, and it is well known to all men and women who are dissatisfied or unhappy in their marriage relations, that they can always find sympathy by consulting the average medium, and can, moreover, find justification for illicit love by invoking the spirits of the dead through such mediums.” (Coombs, *Religious Delusions*, p. 132.)

Professor Quackenbos, who made a special study of the system, pronounced this verdict: “The teachings of Spiritism regarding marriage are subversive of all respect for the sacredness of the institution as ordained by God. It takes the ground that every person has an ‘affinity’ to whom he or she will eventually be united in the world to come, no matter how disappointing the search for this affinity may be on earth. The evils of wedded life are due to the union of persons who are not such spiritual affinities. Ill-assorted married couples are at liberty to separate. Divorce is justified as soon as companionship becomes for any reason disagreeable or undesirable. Thus the union of hearts after God’s holy ordinance is degraded to a living together like beasts in a lair: and a man may break his marriage vows *ad infinitum* in the pursuit of his spiritual affinity. In this way encouragement is given to licentiousness; a formal marriage finally becomes unnecessary, and men and women literally

wrap themselves in the filthy skirts of Ashtoreth. Spiritism asserts that every one will be married in the next world, and that the mates or affinities of those who remain single on earth live in waiting in the spirit-land. Hence it affects to solemnize the marriage of women with demons. . . . 'Those in communion with a class of spirits above them run no risk of forming uncongenial matrimonial relations, as a spirit out of the form can perceive affinities more readily than a person in the natural body; consequently, marriages formed by them will be happy ones, and the offspring of such, gentle and loving, harmonizing the future.' " (Quoted in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1900, p. 146 f.)

Andrew Jackson Davis wrecked a happy family in this affinity hunting. Leo Miller says every desire of the passions is a righteous desire. Dr. A. B. Child wrote a book which all Spiritists accepted as good doctrine. Here are some of its statements: "Whatever is, is right." "Whatever desire there is, good or so-called bad, is a natural desire of the soul. Vice as well as virtue is beautiful. Both are right." Leo Miller practised what he preached, and induced Mattie Strickland to leave her parents and follow him. The Spiritistic convention at Rock Island, Ills., 1886, declared: "There is no such thing as moral obligation. Vice is as good as virtue." (Coombs, *op. cit.*, p. 180.)

Victoria Woodhull, whose advocacies of free love became too indecent to be endured by the State authorities, became president of the National Spiritualist Association. "Some years ago, six of the editors of Spiritistic papers," says Coombs, "and that is about all of them, were free-lovers." *The Crucible* was edited by Moses Hull, who published the fact that he was living with Mattie Sawyer without marriage. Mr. Hull, by way of defense, said: "We hold damning facts about

nearly all of the Spiritualist lecturers." The editor had gathered these facts to prove that the other editors were as deep in the mire of free-lovism as he. He openly confessed his free-lovism. The records he published are too debasing to print here. In 1877 he advocated the abrogation of the marriage relation, and free, promiscuous relations of the sexes. (Coombs, p. 131.)

From a Spiritualistic book, *Whatever Is, Is Right*, circulating among a certain section of advanced Spiritualists, Algernon J. Pollock quotes the following in *The Fundamentals*, X., page 122:

"What is evil? Evil does not exist; evil is good."

"What is a lie? A lie is the truth intrinsically; it holds a lawful place in creation; it is a necessity."

"What is vice? Vice, and virtue too, are beautiful in the eyes of the soul."

"What is virtue? Virtue is good and sin is good. The woman who came to the well of Sychar was just as pure in spirit before she met Christ, even though she was a harlot, as she was afterwards when she went to live a different life. There's no difference between Herod, the murderer of the babies in Bethlehem, and Christ, the Savior of men."

"What is murder? Murder is good. Murder is a perfectly natural act."

"What are evil spirits? There are no evil spirits. There is no devil and no Christ. Christ and the devil are both alike."

"For not a path on earth is trod  
That does not lead the soul to God."

"No matter how bad that path may be, whether it be the path of a liar, the murderer, it is the path of divine ordination and divine destiny."

We have seen enough of the doctrines and morals of Spiritism to convince any honest searcher after truth that it is born in the abyss; that its chief head and leader is the devil, and that it is not only a wretched counterfeit, but one of the worst enemies of Christianity. It denies the authority of the Scriptures and the essential doctrines of Christianity—the deity, messiahship and atonement of Christ—and teaches doctrines and morals subversive of Christian faith and corrosive of Christian life. Its votaries may claim to be able to be Spiritists and at the same time be good Christians; but the word of God gives them no place in the Christian church; for “every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of anti-christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world” (1 John 4:3). And the holy God has declared once for all time: “There shall not be found among you a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer; for all that do these things are an abomination to the Lord” (Deut. 18:11, 12).



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Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: Nov. 2004

**Preservation Technologies**

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

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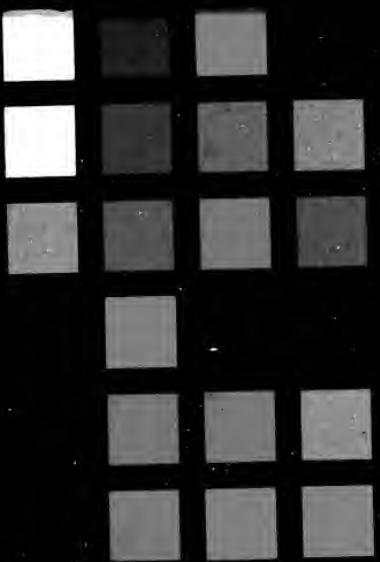
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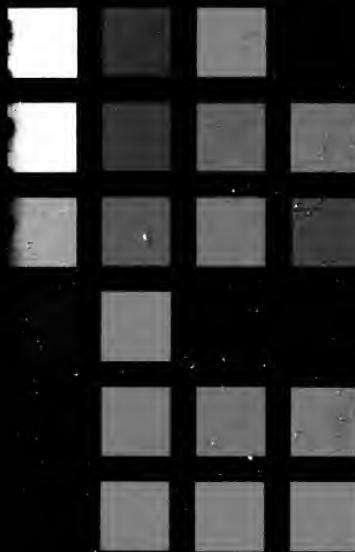


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